Of the Imytacion or folowyng of Chryste/ and of the despysynge of all vanytes of the worlde. The fyrste Chappytre.

He that folowyth me sayth Chryste our Sauyoure walketh nat in darknes/ but he shall haue the lyght of lyfe. these be the wordes of our lorde Jhesu chryste: wherby we be admonysshed and warned that we shal folowe his techynges and his maner of leuynge: if we wyll truely be illumyned and be delyuered from all blyndnes of herte. Let all the study of our herte be therfore frō hens forthe to haue our meditacion holly fixed in the lyfe/ & in the holy techinges of Jesu chryste: for his techynges are of more vertues of more ghostly strength thā are the techynge of all angellys and sayntes And he that thorughe grace myght haue the inner eye of his soule / openyd i to the

ſothfaſte beholdynge of the goſpelles of
Cryſte/ſhulde fynde in them Mãna: that
is to ſay ſpirituell fode of the ſoule. But it
is oft tymes ſene that ſome perſõs which
ofte here the goſpellys of Cryſte: haue lyt-
tell ſwetnes therin/& that is for they haue
not the ſpirite of Cryſte. wherfore: if
we wyll haue the trewe vnderſtandynge
of Cryſtes goſpelles we muſt ſtudy to cõ
forme our lyfe to his lyfe as nyghe as we
can. what auayleth it a man to reaſon
hyghe ſecrete myſteries of the Trinite if
he lacke mekenes/wherby he dyſpleaſeth
the Trinite: truely nothynge/For hyghe
curyous reaſons make nat the man holy
nor ryght wyſe. But a good lyfe maketh
hym belouyd with god/I had leuer fele
compunction of herte for my ſynnes/thã
onely to knowe the diffinicion of compũ-
ction. If thou couldeſt all the Bible with
out the boke: and alſo feynges of all Phi
loſophers by herte what ſhulde it profyte
the without grace & charite. All that is i
this worlde is vanite: but to loue god &
onely to ſerue hym. This is the moſte no
ble and the moſte excellẽt wyſdome that
maye be in any creature/ by diſpyſyng of
this worlde: to drawe dayly nerer & nerer

to the kyngdome of heue. It is therfore a
greate vanyte/ to labour inordynatly for
worldly ryches that shortly shall perysshe
& to couete honour/or any other inordy-
nate pleasures or flesshely delytes in this
lyfe/wherby a man after this lyfe shal be
sore & greuously punysshed. Howe great
a vanyte is it also to desyre a longe lyfe &
lytell to care for a good lyfe/to hede thyn
ges present: and not to prouyde for thyn-
ges that are to come/to loue thynge that
shortly shall passe awaye / & not to haste
thyther where is Joye euerlastyng. Also
haue this common prouerbe ofte in thy
mynde/that the eye is not satisfied ne ful
ly pleased with the syght of any bodely
thynge / ne the eare with herynge. And
therfore studye to withdrawe the loue of
thy soule frō all thynge that ben vysible/
and tourne it to thynges that be inuysy-
ble. For they that folowe theyr sensualyte/hurte theyr owne conscyence and lese
the grace of god.

Agaynst vayne seculer cōynge and of a mekc knowynge of our selfe. The.ii. Chapytre.

Every man naturally desyreth to knowe: but what auayleth knowlege without the drede of god. A meke husbondman that serueth god is more acceptable to hym/than is a curyouse Philosopher whiche consyderynge the course of heuyn / wylfully forgetteth hym selfe: he that well knoweth hym selfe is vyle and obiecte in his owne syghte and hathe no delyte in the vayne prayseynges of man/ if I knewe all thynges that by in this worlde without charite/what shulde it auayle me before god that iugyth euery man after his dydes/ let vs therfore cesse fro the desyre of such vayne knowlege/for oftē tymes is foūde therin great dystraction and deceyte of the enemy whereby the soule is moch hyn drede and let from the perfyte and trewe loue of god. They that haue great connynge desyre cōmonly to be sene and to be beholdē wyse in the worlde/and there be many thynges that the knowlege of them bryngeth but lytell profyte and lytell frute to the soule / and he is very vnwyse that taketh hede to any other thyng thē to that/that shal profyte hym to the helth of his soule/wordes fede not the soule/ but

a good lyfe refrellheth the mynde / and a clene conscyence bryngeth a man to a fer me and a stable truste in god. The more cõnyng thou haste/ if thou lyue not therafter/the more greuously shalt thou therfore be iuged for the myslyynge therof. Therfore reyse not thy selfe in to pryd for any crafte or cõnig that is gyuẽ vnto the but haue therfore the more feare & drede in thy herte / for certayne it is that thou muste hereafter yelde therfore the strayter accompte / if thou thynke that thou knowest many thynges and haste great cõnynge / yet knowe it for certayne that there be many mo thynges that thou knowest not. And so thou mayste not ryghtwysely thynke thy selfe cõning/but oughtest rather to confesse thyne ygnorannce & vnconnynge: why wylte thou preferre thy selfe in connynge before other/sythe there by manyother more excellẽt & more connynge than thou / and better lernyde in the lawe / if thou wylt any thynge lerne and knowe profytablye to the helth of thy soule/lerne to be vnknowẽ & be glade to beholden vyle and noughte and vncõnynge as thou arte. The moste hygh and the moste profytable connynge is this/a

man to haue a sothfaste knowlege and a full despysynge of hym selfe. Also a man nat to presume of hym selfe / and alwaye to iuge and to thynke well and blessedly of other / is a sygne and a token of great wysdome and of great perfeccion and synguler grace/ if thou se any persō synne or cōmytte any great cryme openly before the/yet iuge nat thy selfe to be better thā he. For thou knowest nat how lōge thou shalt perseuer in goodnes we be al fraple but thou shalte iuge no man more fraple than thy selfe.

Of the teachynge of trouthe. The.iii. Chapitre.

Happy and blessed is that persō whome trouthe teacheth & enformeth nat by fygures or by deceptfull voyces: but as the trouthe is/ our oppynyō and our wytte many tymes deceyueth vs/ For we se not the trouthe/ what auayleth vs the knowlege of suche thig⁹ as shall neyther helpe vs at the day of Iugement if we knowe thē/ nor hurte vs if we knowe them nat. It is therfore great folye to be neglygent in suche thynges as be profytable and necessary to vs

and to labourc for ſuche thynges that be but curyous and dampnable. Truely if we do ſo we haue eyen but we ſe nat: and what auayleth vs the knowelege of the kynde and werkynge of creatures truely nothynge/ he to whome the euerlastyng worde that is Ieſus ſpeketh: is dyſcharged of many vayne oppynyōs/and of that worde all thynges proceede and all thynges openly ſhewe crye and belyue that he is god. No man without hym vnderſtandeth the trouthe ne ryghtfully iugeth/but he to whom all thynges is one/ and he that all thynges draweth i to one and all thynges ſetteth in one/ and deſyreth nothynge: but one may anone be ſtablyd i herte and be fully pacyfyed in god. O trouthe that god arte / make me one with the in parfyte charite/ for al that I rede / here / or ſe without the is a greuous thyng to me/ for in the is all that I wyll or may deſyre / Let all Doctours be ſtyll in thy preſence: and let all creatures kepe thē in ſcylēce & thou only lord ſpeke to myſoule. The more that man is onede to the/& the more that he is gathered togither i the/the more he vnderſtādith without labour hygh ſecrete myſteries/for he

hathe receyued from aboue the lyghte of vnderstaundynge. A clene pure and a stable herte is not broken ne lyghtely ouercome with ghostly laboures/ for he doth all thynge to the honour of god / & for he is clerely mortified to hym selfe/ therfore he coueyteth to be fre fro folowynge his owne wyl. what hyndreth the more than thy affeccyons nat fully mortyfied to the wyll of the spirite /truely nothyng more. A good deuoute man so ordreth his outwarde besynes that it drawe not hym to the loue of it / but that he compell it to be obedyent to the wyll of the spyrite and to the ryght iugement of reason. who hath a strenger batayle: thā he that laboureth for to ouercome hym selfe/ and that shuld be our dayly labour & our dayly desyre to ouercome our selfe/ that we may be made strenger in spyryte/ & encrease dayly from better to better. Euery perfeccion in this lyfe hath some imperfeccyon annexed vnto it & there is no knowlege i this worlde but that it is myxte with some blyndnes of ygnorauunce. And therfore a meke knowynge of our selfe is more syker waye to god/ than is the serchyng for hyghnes of connynge. Connynge well ordred is not

to be blamed for it is goode and cōmeth of god/but a clene conscyence and a vertuous lyfe is moche better & more is to be desyred / bycause some men study to haue cōnynge rather than to lyue well. Therfore they erre many tymes & bryng forth litel good fruit or none. O if they wold be as busye to auoyde synne & to plante vertues in theyr soules / as they be to moue questions: there shulde nat be so many cupll thynges sene in the worlde/ne so moche cupll example gyuen to the people/ne yet so moche dyssolute lyuynge in religion. At the daye of Jugement it shall nat be asked of vs what we haue red/but what we haue done ne howe well we haue sayd but howe relygiously we haue lyued. Tell me nowe where be all the great clerkes & famous Doctours whome thou hast wel knowē. when they lyued they flourysshed greatly i theyr lernyng / and nowe other men occuppe theyr prebendes/ & promocions/& I can not tel whether they thynke any thynge on them. In theyr lyfe they where holdē greyt in the worlde/ & nowe is lytell spekynge of them. O howe shortly passeth awaye the glory of this worlde with all the false deceyuable pleasures of

it/wolde to god they? lyfe hade accorded well with they? lernynge / for than hade they well studyed and rede / howe many perysshe dayly i this worlde by vayne cõ=nynge that care lytell for a good lyfe ne for the seruyce of god. And bycause they desyre rather to be great i the worlde thã to be meke/therfore they vanysshe awaye in they? lernynge as smoke in the eyre. Truely he is great/ that hath great cha=rite: & he is great that is lytell i his owne syght & that setteth at nought al worldly pleasures as vyle dunge/so that he maye wynne Chryste. And that person is very well taught that forsaketh his owne wyl and folowyth the wyll of god.

That lyghte credence is nat to be gyuen to wordes. The.iii. Chapitre.

IT is nat good lyghtly to by=leue euery worde or instyncte that cõmeth / but the thyng is aryscdly and leasurely to be cõsydred and pondred that almyghty god be nat offen ded thrroughe oure lyghtnes. But alas for sorowe we be so frayle that we anone

byleue of other cupll soner thā good/But neuertheles partyte men be nat so lyghte of credence/for they knowe well that the frayltye of mā is more prone to cupll thā to good/and that it is i wordes very vnstable. It is therfore great wysdome nat to be hastye i our dedes/ne to trust moche in our owne wyttes / nor lyghtely to byleue euery tale / nor to shewe anone to other all that we here or byleue. Take alwaye counseyle of a wyse mā and coueyte rather to be instructed and to be ordered by other than to folowe thyne owne inuēcyon/a good lyfe maketh a man wyse anenste god and instructeth hym in many thyngs that a synful man shall neuer fele ne knowe. The more meke that a man is in hym selfe and the more obediēt that he is to god/the more wyse & the more peasefull shall he be in euery thynge that he shall haue to do.

☙ Of the redynge of holy scrypture. The.v. Chapitre.

CHarite is to be soughte i holy scripture / and nat eloquence & it shulde be redde with the same spyrite that

it was fyrste made: we ought also to seke
in holye Scripture ghostely profyte/ra-
ther than curyosytye of style/and as glad
ly shall we rede symple & deuoute bokes
of hyghe lernynge and connyng/ let nat
the auctorite of thyne auctoure myslyke
the/whether he were of great connynge
or lytel/but that the loue of the very pure
trouth stye the to rede. Aske not who sayd
this: but take good hede what is sayde/
men passe lyghtly awaye/but the trouth
of god euer abydeth. Almyghty god spe-
keth to vs in his scrypture in dyuers ma-
ners without acceptynge of persons/but
our curyosyte ofte letteth vs in redynge
of scrypture whan we wyll reason and ar-
gue thynges that we shulde mekely & sim-
ply passe ouer/ if thou wylt profyte by re-
dynge of scrypture rede mekely symply &
faythfully and neuer desyre to haue ther-
by the name of connynge. Aske gladly &
here mekely the sayeng of sayntes: & mys-
lyke the not the parables of auncyent fa-
thers for they were not spoken without
great cause.

¶ Of inordynate affectyons. The.vi. Chapytre.

When a mā despyseth any thynge inordynatly: forthwith he is inquyet in hym selfe. The proude man / and the couetous man neuer haue reste: but the meke man and the poore in spirite lyueth in great aboundaūce of rest & peace. A man that is nat yet mortyfyed to hym selfe/is lyghtly tempted and ouercomen in lytell and small temptacions. And he that is weyke in spirite and is yet somwhat Carnall and inclyned to sensyble thynge may hardly withdrawe hym selfe from worldly despyses. And therfore he hathe ofte great greefe & heupnes in herte whan he withdrawethe hym from them. And he dysdayneth anone if any man resyste hym/and if he optcyne that he despyseth: yet he is inquyetyd with grudge of conscyence for he hathe folowed his passiō whiche nothynge helpethe to gettige of the peace that he despysed. Than by resystynge of passiōs is goten the very true peace of herte and nat by folowynge of thē/there is therfore no peace i the herte of a Carnall man/ Nor in the herte of a mā that gyueth hym selfe all to outward thynge/but in the herte of a ghostely mā or woman whiche haue theyr delyte in

god / is founde great peace and inwarde quietnes.

That vayne hope and elacyon of mynde are to be fled and auoyded. The .viii. Chapitre.

HE is vayne that puttethe his truſte in man or i any creature be nat a ſhamed to ſerue other for the loue of Jeſu chriſte/and to be poze i this worlde for his ſake /truſte nat i thy ſelfe / but all thy truſte ſet in god/do that in the is to pleaſe hym / and he ſhall well helpe forthe thy good wyll . Truſte nat i thyne owne cõynge : ne yet in the connynge or polycye of any creature lyuige but rather i the grace of god whiche helpeth meke perſons/and thoſe that p̃ſume of them ſelfe he ſuffereth to fall tyll they be meke / glorifie nat thy ſelfe in thy ryches nor in thy worldly frendes for that they be myghty / but let all thy glory be i god onely that gyueth all thynges and that deſyreth to gyue hym ſelfe aboue all thynges. Exalte not thy ſelfe for the largenes or fayrenes of bodye/for with a lytell ſyckenes it maye be ſone defowled /

Joye nat in thy selfe for the habylyte or rydenes of wyt leste thou displease god of whose gyfte it is all that thou haste/ holde nat thy selfe better than other/leste happely thou be therby impeyred in the syght of god that knowyth all that is in man/be not proude of thy good dedꝫ / for the iugemētꝫ of god be other thā the iugemētꝫ of mā to whom it displeaseth ofte tymes that pleaseth mā. If thou haue any goodnes or vertue in the/ belyue yet that there is moche more goodnes and vertue in other so that thou mayste alwaye kepe the in mekenes. It hurteth nat thoughe thou holde thy selfe worse thā any other thoughe it be nat so i dede/ but it hurteth moche if thou p̄ferre thy selfe aboue any other be he neuer so great a syñer. Great peace is with the meke man but in the herte of a proude man is alwaye enuye & indygnacyon.

That moche familyarite is to be fledde. The. viii. Chapitre.

Open nat thy herte to euery p̄son but to hym that is wyse secrete and dredynge god / be seldome with ponge folkes and straungers flater

not ryche men/and afore great mē do nat lyghtly appere. Accōpany thy selfe with meke persons and symple in herte that be deuoute and of good gouernaūce and treate with them of thynges that may edyfye and strēgth thy soule. Be nat familyer to any woman. Coueyte to be familyer onely with god and his Angelis/ but the familyarite of mā as moche as thou maiste loke thou eschewe/charite is to be had to all: but familyarite is nat expedient. Somtyme it happeneth that a persō vnknowen throughe his good fame is moche cōmendable /whose presence after lyketh vs not so moche. we wene sōtyme with our presence to please other / whan we rather displease them throughe the euyll maners and euyll condycyons that they se and wyll consydre in vs.

Of meke subiection and obedyence and that we shall gladly folowe the counseyle of other. The.ix. Chapitre.

IT is a great thynge to be obedient to lyue vnder a Prelate & in nothynge to seke our owne

lybertye: It is moche more surer waye to stande in the state of obedience: than in the state of prelacye. Many be vnder obedience more of necessyte than of charite/ and they haue great payne and lyghtely murmure & grudge: and they shall neuer haue lyberte and frydome of spirite tyll they hooly submyte them selfe vnto theyr superiour. Go here and there where thou wylte: & thou shalte neuer fynde perfyte rest: but in meke obedience vnder the gouernaunce of thy prelate. The ymagenynge & the chaungynge of places hathe deceyued many a religious yson/trouthe it is that euery man is dysposed to do after his owne wyll/and best can agre with them that folowe his wayes. But if we wyll that god be amonge vs: we muste sometyme leue our owne wyl thoughe it seme good/that we maye haue loue and peace with other. who is so wyse that he can fully knowe all thynges: truely none. Therfore truste nat moche to thyn owne wytte. But here gladly the counseyle of other. And if parcase the thynge whiche thou woldest haue done be good and profytable/ and yet neuertheleſſe thou leuest thyne owne wyll therin and folowest o-

ther: Thou shalte fynde moche profyte therby. I haue ofte tymes herde say that it is more surer waye to here & take cou-sayle than it is to gyue it. It is good to here euery mannes counsayle but nat to agre whā reason requyreth it is a sygne of a great syngularyte of mynde and of moche inwarde pryde.

That we shulde auoyde superfluyte of wordes and the company of worldly lyuynge people The.x. Chapitre.

AVoyde the cōpany of al worldly lyuyng people as moche as thou mayste: for the treatyng of worldly maters letteth greatly the feruoure of spirite/thoughe it be done with a good intēt/we be anone deceyued with vanyte of the worlde and in maner are made as thrall vnto it: but we take good hede. I wolde I had holde my peace many tymes whan I haue spoken/and that I had nat ben so moche amonge worldly company as I haue ben. But why are we so glad to speke and cōmon to gyther syth we so seldome departe without some

hurte of conscience / this is the cause by our cõmynynge to gyther we thynke to comforte eche other and to refresshe ouer hertes whan we be troubled with vayne ymagynacyõs: and we speke moste gladly of suche thynges as we moste loue or elles of thynges that be moste contrarye-ous vnto vs. But alas for sorowe all is vayne that we do / for this outwarde cõforte is no lytell hyndraunce of the treue inwarde comforte that commeth of god. Therfore it is necessary that we watche & praye that the tyme passe nat awaye fro vs in ydelnes: If it be lawfull and expedient to speke/speke thã of god and suche thyngs as are to the edyfyng of thy soule or of thy neybours/ & cuyll vse and a necclygence of our ghostely profyte/ maketh vs ofte tymes to take lytel hede howe we shulde speke. Neuertheless somtyme it helpeth ryght moche to the helthe of the soule/a deuoute cõmynynge of spirituall thyngs: specyally whã men of one mynde & of one spirite in god / do mete and speke and cõmen to gyther.

¶ The meanes to gette peas/and of desyre to profyte in vertues.

The xi. Chapitre.

We myghte haue moche peace if we wolde nat medle with other mēnes ſayinges and doynges that belonge nat vnto vs/ Howe maye he longe lyue i peace that wylfully wyll medle with other mēnes buſynes/and that ſeketh occaſyons withoute the in the worlde & ſeldome or neuer gathereth hymſelfe to gether in god/bleſſed be the treue ſymple & meke perſons/ for they ſhall haue great plente of peace/ why haue many ſayntes bene ſo perfytly contemplatyue / for they alwaye ſtudied to mortifie thē fro worldly deſyres that they myght freely with al the power of theyr herte tēde to our lorde But we be occupied with our paſſions & be moche buſyed with tranſytory thynge and it is very ſeldome that we may ouercome any one vyce. And we be nothynge quycke to our dayly dutyes wherfore we remayne colde and ſlowe to deuocyon / if we were perfytely mortified to the worlde and to the fleſſhe and were inwardly puryfied in ſoule we ſholde anone ſonour heuenly thynges and ſomwhat ſhulde we haue experyence of heuenly contemplacion. The greateſt hynderaūce of the heuenly contemplacyon is / for we are nat

yet clerely delyuered fro our passiõs and
concupiscence/ nr we enforce not our selfe
to folowe the waye that holy saintz haue
gone before vs/but whã any lytel aduer-
syte cõmeth to vs we anone caste downe
therin & tourne vs ouersone to seke man-
nes cõforte. But if we wolde as stronge
men and as myghty Champions fyghte
strongly i this ghostly batayle/we shulde
vndoughtedly se the helpe of god come i
our nede / for he is alwaye redye to helpe
all them that truste in hym. And he pro-
cureth occasyõs of suche batayle to thẽde
we shulde ouercome and haue the victory
& in the ende to haue the greater rewarde
therfore: if we set thende and perfeccyon
of our relygyon in these outwarde obser-
uances/ our deuocion shall sone be ended.
wherfore we muste set our are depe to the
rote of the tree/that we purged fro all pas
sions maye haue a quyet mynde. If we
wolde euery yere ouercome one vyce / we
shulde anone come to perfeccion / but I
feare rather that contrary wyse we were
better and purer i the begynnynge of our
conuersion than we be many yeres after
we were conuerted. Our feruour and de-
syre to vertue shulde dayly increase in vs

as we increace in age. But it is nowe thought a great thynge yf we may holde a lytell spercle of the feruour that we had fyrste/but if we wolde at the begynnyng breke the euyll inclinacion that we haue to our selfe & to our owne wyll/we shulde after do vertuous werkes easelye & with great gladnes of herte. It is an harde thynge to leue euyll customes: but it is more harde to breke our owne wyll. But it is moste harde euermore to lye i payne and endlesly to lese the ioyes of heuen. If thou ouercom nat small thyngz & lyghte. howe shalte thou thā ouercome the greater. Resyste therfore quyckely in the begynnynge thy euyll inclynacyons/ & leue of hole all thyne euyll customes leste haply by lytell and lytell they brynge the after to greater dyffyculte. O if thou woldest consydre howe great inly peas thou shuldest haue thy selfe & howe great gladnes thou shuldest cause in other in behauynge of thy selfe well. I suppose veryly thou woldest be moche more dylygent to profyte in vertue than thou haste ben before this tyme.

Of the profyte of aduersyte.
The.xii. Chapitre.

It is good that we haue sōtyme gryefes & aduersites: for they dryue a man to beholde hym selfe & to se that he is here but as i an exyle. & be lerned therby to knowe that he ought nat to put his trouste i any worldly thynge. It is good also that we suffre sōtyme contradiccion/and that we be holde of other as cuyll and wretched & synfull thoughe we do well and entende well/for suche thynges helpe vs to meknes and myghtely defende vs fromc vayne glory & pryde: we take god the better to be oure Juge & wytnes / whan we be outwardly dispysed in the worlde / & that the worlde iugeth nat wel of vs/therfore a mā ought to stable hym self so fully i god that what aduersyte so euer befall vnto hym he shal nat nede to seke any outwarde comforte. whā a good man is troubled or tempted or is inquyeted with cuyll thoughtes / thā he vnderstandeth & knoweth that god is moste necessary to him / & that he may no thyng do that is good without hym. Thā he sorowyth wayleth and prayeth for the miseries that he ryghtfully suffreth. Thā it yketh hym also the wretchydnes of this lyfe/and he coueyteth to be dissolued

from this bodye of dethe / and to be with Chriſte. And than alſo he ſeeth wel: there maye be no ful peace ne perfite ſykernes in this worlde.

Of temptations to be reſyſted. The.xiii. Chapitre.

AS longe as we lyue in this worlde: we maye nat be fully without temptacyon / ✠ For as Job ſayth temptacyō is the lyfe of mā vpon erthe / therfore euery man ſhulde be well auenſte his temptacyōs and watche in prayers that the ghoſtly enemy fynde nat tyme & place to deceyue hym / whiche neuer ſlepethe but alwaye goeth aboute ſekynge whome he maye deuoure. There is no man ſo perfyte ne ſo holye in this worlde / that he ſomtyme ne hathe temptacyōs / and we may nat fully be without them / for thoughe they be for the tyme be tye greuous and paynfull / yet if they be reſyſted they be very profytable / for a mā by experyence of ſuche temptacyons / is made more meke and is alſo purged and ſformed i dyuers maner whiche he ſhulde neuer haue knowen / but by experyence of

ſuche temptacyons. All bleſſed ſayntes that nowe is crowned in heuen grewe & profyted by temptacions and tribulatiõs and thoſe that coulde nat well bere temptacyons/but were fynally ourcome/be taken perpetuall priſoners en hell. There is no ordre ſo holye ne no place ſo ſecrete that is fully without temptacion/& there is no man that is fully ſyker from it here in this lyfe/for in our corrupte bodye we bere the mater wherby we be tẽpted/that is our inordynate cõcuppyſcence where in we were borne. As one temptacion goth/ an other cõmeth and ſo we alwaye haue ſomwhat to ſuffre/and the cauſe is for we haue loſte our inocẽſye. Many folke ſeke to fle temptacion / and they fall the more greuouſly in to it. For by onely fleynge we maye nat haue victorye/but by meknes and pacyence we be made ſtronger thã all our enemyes/He that onely fleeth the outwarde occaſions and cutteth nat awaye the inordynate deſyres hydde inwardly in the herte ſhall lytell profyte/& temptacions ſhall lyghtly come to hym agayne and greue hym more thã they dyd fyrſte / by lytell and lytell with pacẽce & with ſufferaunce / and with the helpe of

god/ thou shalte soner ouercome temptacions thā with thyne owne strength and importunyte. In thy temptacyon it is good that thou ofte aske counsayle and that thou be nat rygorouse to no plō that is tempted/ but be glad to comforte hym as thou woldest be cōforted. The begynnynge of all cupll temptacyons is in cōstaunce of mynde and to lytell a truste in god. For as a shyp without a guide is dryuen hether and theder with euery storme So an vnstable man that anone leueth his good purpose in god/ is dyuersly tēpted/the fyre proueth golde/and temptacyon proueth the right wyse mā/we knowe nat many tymes what we can suffre/ but temptacyō sheweth playnly what we are and what vertue is in vs. It is necessary in the begynnynge of euery tēptacion to be well ware / for thā the enemye is sone ouercome if he be nat suffred to enter in to the herte. But that he be resysted and shytte out as sone as he pfereth to entre for as a bodely medicyn is very late ministred whā the sycknes hathe ben suffred to encrease by longe contynuaunce / so it is of temptacyon. Fyrste commeth to the mynde an vnclene thoughte / and after

foloweth a stronge Imagynacyon: and than delectacyon and dyuers euyll mocyons/ and in the ende foloweth a ful assent. And so by lytell and lytell the enemye hathe full entre for he was nat wysely resisted in the begynnyng/ & the more slowe that a man is in resystynge the more weyke he is to resyste / and the enemye is dayly the more stronger agaynst hym. Some persons haue theyr greatest temptacions in the begynnynge of theyr conuersyon / some in the ende: and some in maner all theyr lyfe tyme be troubled therwith / and ther be many that be but lyghtly tempted: and all this cōmeth of the great wysdom & ryghtwysnes of god whiche knoweth the state and meryte of euery persō: and ordeyneth all thyngs for the beste / and to the euerlastynge helthe & saluacyon of his electe & chosen people. Therfore we shall nat dyspeyre whan we be tempted but shall the more feruentlye praye vnto god that he of his infynyte goodnes and fatherly pyte vouchesafe or helpe vs i euery nede/ & that he accordige to the saynge of saynt Poule so preuēt vs with his grace in euery tēptaciō/that we shall may susteyne/let vs than meken our

soules vnder the strōge hāde of almighty god/for he wyll saue all them and exalte all them that be here meke and lowe in spirite. In temptacions & trybulacyons a man is proued howe moche he hathe profited/& his merit is therby the great a-nenste god/and his vertues are the more openly shewed. It is no great maruayle if a man be feruent and deuoute whā he felethe no grefe: but if he can suffre pacy-ently in the tyme of temptacion or other aduersite / and therwithall can also stryre hym selfe to feruour of spirite/it is a tokē that he shall greatly profyte hereafter in vertue and grace. Some persons be kept from any great tēptacions: and yet day-ly they be ouercome thrōughe lytell and small occasyons/and that is of the great goodnes and suffraunce of dod to kepe thē in mekenes/that they shall nat truste ne presume of them selfe/ that se thē selfe so lyghtly and in so lytell thynges dayly ouercome.

That we shall nat Juge lyghtly other mēnes dedes / ne cleue moche to our owne wyll

The. xiiii. chapitre.

Haue alwaye a good eye to thy selfe/and beware thou iuge nat lyghtly other men. In iugyng other men a man ofte laboureth i vayne ofte erreth and lyghtly offendeth god/but in iugynge hym selfe and his owne dedȝ/ he alwaye laboureth frutfully and to his ghostly profyte / we iuge oft tymes after our herte and our owne affeccyons & nat after the truthe/for we ofte lese the treue iugement throughe our pryuate loue. But if god were alwaye the hole intent of our desyre we shulde nat so lightly erre in our iugementes/nor so lyghtly be troubled for that we be resisted of our wyll/ but cõmenly there is in vs some inwarde inclynacyon or some outwarde affeccyon that draweth our herte with them frome the treue iugemẽt. Many psõs throughe a secrete loue that they haue to theyr selfe worke vndiscretely after theyr owne wyl and nat after the wyll of god / & yet they wene nat so/& they seme to stande i great inwarde peace wh, n thynges folowe after theyr mide:but if it folowe otherwyse than they wolde / anone they be moued with impacience and be ryght heuy and pensyfe. By diuersites of oppynyons be

sprõge many tymes dyscenciõs bytwene frendes & neyghbours/ and also bytwene religious & deuoute persones. An olde custome is hardly broken and no man wyll lyghtly be remoued from his owne wyll/ but if thou cleue more to thyne owne wyl or to thyne owne reason than to the meke obediẽce of Jesu Chryste / it wyll be lõge or thou be a mã illumined with grace/for almyghty god wyll that we be perfytely subiecte & obedient to hym / and that we ascende & ryse hyghe aboue our owne wyl & aboue our owne reason by a great brennynge loue and a hole desyre to hym.

Of werkes done in charite. The.xv. Chapitre.

For nothyng in the worlde nor for the loue of no creature / no euyll is to be done /but sõtyme for the nede & cõforte of our neyghboure a good dede maye be deferred or be tourned in to a nother good dede / for therby the good dede is nat destroyed/but is chãged in to better/without charite the outwarde dede is lytell to be praysed but what so euer is done of charite be it neuer

so lytell or neuer so despisable in syght of the worlde: it is ryght profytable before god. whiche iugeth all thynge after the intēt of the doer & nat after the greatnes or worthynes of the dede: he doth moche that moche loueth god: & he doth moche that dothe his dede well: & he dothe his dede well that dothe it rather for the cōmynalte than for his owne wyll. A dede somtyme semeth to be done of charite & of loue to god/whā it is rather done of a carnalite & of a fleshhy loue than of a charitable loue/for cōmonly some carnal inclynacion to our frēdes/ or some inordynate loue to our selfe/or some hope of a temporall rewarde or a desyre of some other pfyte moueth vs to do the dede & nat the pure loue of charite. Charite seketh nat hym selfe i that he doth: but he desireth to do onely that shall be honour & prayspnge to god/he enuyeth no mā for he loueth no pryuate loue: nor he wyll nat Joye i hym selfe but he coueteth aboue al thigz to be blessed in god / he knoweth well that nō goodnes begynneth originally of mā/ & therfore he referreth al goodnes to god of whome all thyngz procede & i whome all blessed saitz do reste i eucrlastige fruicion.

O he that had a lytell sperde of this parfyte charite shulde fele sothefastly in his soule that all erthly thynges be full of vanyte.

Of the sufferynge of other mennes defautes. The. xvi. Chapitre.

Suche defautes as we can nat amende in our selfe nor i other/ we muste pacyently suffre tyll our lorde of his goodnes wyll otherwise dispose. And we shall thynke that happely it is so best for to be for prouige of our pacience: without whiche our merytes are but lytell to be pondred/ Neuertheles thou shalte praye hertely for suche impedimentes that our lorde of his great mercy and goodnes vouchesaue to helpe vs that we may pacyently bere thē. If thou admonysshe any persone ones or twyse & he wyll nat take it: stryue nat ouermoche with hym but cōmyte all to god that his wyll be done and his honoure in all his seruauntes / for he can well by his goodnes tourne euyll in to good: studye alway that thou be pacyēt i sufferynge of other mēnes defaultz for thou haste many thi-

ges in the that other do suffre of the / and if thou can nat make thy selfe to be as thou woldest/howe mayste thou thā loke to haue an other to be ordred in all thynges after thy wyll. we wolde gladly haue other perfyte / but wyll nat amende oure owne defautȝ/we wolde that other shulde be straytely corrected for theyr offences: but we wyll nat be corrected. It myslyketh vs that other haue lybertie: but we wyll nat be denyed of that we aske. we wolde also that other shuld be restrayned accordynge to the statutes / but we in no wyse wyll be restrayned. Thus it appereth cuydently that we seldome ponder our neyghboure as we do our selfe: if all men were perfyte what had we than to suffre of our neyghbours for god/ therfor god hath so ordeyned that one of vs shall lerne to bere anothers burden/ for in this worlde no man is without defaute: no man without a burden / no man sufficient to hym selfe / nor no man wyse ynoughe of hym selfe / wherfore it behoueth eche one of vs to bere the burden of other / to comforte other/ to helpe other/ to enforme other/ and to instructe and admonysshe other in all charite: who is of

moste vertue appereth best in tyme of aduersite. Occasyõs make nat a man frayle but they shewe openly what he is.

¶ what shulde be the lyfe of a true religious persone. The. xvii. Chapitre.

IT behoueth the to breke thyne owne wyll in many thynges if thou wylt haue peace and concorde with other. It is no lytell thynge to be in monasteries or in congregacions and to contynue there with out complaynynge or myssaynge and faythfully to perseuer there vnto thende / blessed be they that there lyue well & make a good ende. If thou wylte stande surely in grace and mothe profyte i vertue: holde thy selfe as an outlawe and as a pylgrime here i this lyfe/and be glad for the loue of god to be holden as a fole and as a vyle persone in the worlde as thou arte. The habyte and tonsure helpe lytell/but the chaungynge of lyfe & the mortifienge of passiõs make a persone perfyte and true religious / he that seketh any other thynge in religion than purely god & the helthe of his soule shall fynde nothynge there but trouble &

sorowe/and he may nat stãde longe there i peace and quyetnes/that laboureth nat to be lefte & subgect to al. It is good therfore that thou remembre ofte that thou cãmeste to religion to serue and nat to be serued. And that thou arte called thyther to suffre and to labour / & nat to be ydle ne to tell vayne tales. ✠ In religion a man shall be proued as golde in a furnace and no man maye stande longe there in grace and vertue/but he wyl with all his herte meke hym selfe/for the loue of god.

Of the examples of holy fathers. The.xviii. Chapitre.

BEholde the lyuely examples of holy fathers and blessed saintes i whome flouryssheth and shone all true perfection of lyfe and all perfyte religion. And thou shalte se howe lytell it is and weinyghe as nothinge that we do nowe in these dayes in cõparyson of thē. O what is our lyfe if it be to thē compayred. They serued our lorde in hunger & in thurste / in heate/ in colde /i nakednes/in labour: and in werynesse / in vygylles

and fastynges / in prayours and in holy meditacions in persecucions and in many repreffes. O howe many & howe greuous tribulatiõs suffred the apostles martyrs/confessours/virgyns and other holy sayntes that wolde folowe the steppes of Chryst. They refused honoures & all bodely pleasures here in this lyfe: that they myght alway haue the euerlastynge lyfe. O howe strayte and howe abiecte a lyfe lede the holy fathers in wyldernes/howe greuous temptacion they suffred / howe fyersly they were with theyr ghostly enemyes assayled: howe feruẽt prayour they dayly offered to god. what rygourous abstynence they vsed / howe great zeale & feruour they had to spirituall pfyte/how stronge batayle they helde agaynste all synne/aod howe pure and hole intẽt they had to god in all theyr dedes / on the day they laboured & on the mght they prayed And thoughe they laboured on the daye bodely/ yet they prayed in mynde/and so they spente theyr tyme alway frutefully: & thought euery houre shorte for the seruyce of god/& for the great swetnes that they had in heuenly contemplacion/ they forgete otte tymes theyr bodely refeccion

All ryches honour dygnytes kynnesmen and frendes they renounced for the loue of god/they coueted to haue nothynge of the worlde and scarsely they wolde take that was necessary for the bodely kynde. They were poore in worldly goodes but they were riche in grace and vertue: they were nedye outwardly/ but inwardlye in theyr soules they were replenysshed with grace and ghostly cõfortes. To the world they were alyens and straungers/ but to god they were ryght dere and familyer frendes. In the syght of the worlde and in theyr owne syght they were vyle and abiecte/but in the syght of god and of his sayntes they were precious and synglerly electe. In them shone all perfeccion of vertue/true meknes/ symple obedience/ charite/and pacience/with other lyke vertues & gratious gyftes of god. wherfore they profyted dayly in spirite and obteyned great grace of god. They be lefte as an example to all religious persons and more ought theyr examples to stere the to deuotion and to pfyte more and more in vertue and grace/ than the great multytude of dyssolute and ydle persõs shuld any thynge drawe them abacke. O what

feruour was in religious persons at the begynnynge of theyr religion / what deuocion in prayers / what zeale to vertue / what loue to ghostly dysciplyne / & what reuerence and meke obedience florysshed in them vnder the rule of theyr superiour truely theyr dedes yet bere witnesse that they were holy and perfyte that so myghtely subdued the worlde and thryste it vnder fote. Nowe adayes he is accompted vertuous that is no offender and that may with patyence kepe some lytell sparcle of that vertue & of that feruoure that he had fyrste. But alas for sorowe it is throughe our owne slouthe & neglygence and throughe lesynge of tyme that we be so sone fallen from our fyrste feruoure in to suche a ghostely weykenes and dulnes spirite / that in maner it is to tedyous to vs for to lyue / but wolde to god that the desyre to profyte in vertue slepte nat so vtterly in the: that ofte haste sene the holy examples of blessed sayntes.

Of the exercyses of a good religious persone. The xix. Chapitre.

The lyfe of a good religious man shulde shyne in all vertue and be inward as it appereth outwarde and that moche more inwarde for almyghtye god beholdethe the herte whome we shulde alwaye honoure and reuerence as if we were euer in his bodely presence and appere before hym as aungelles clene and pure shynynge in al vertue / we oughte euery daye to renewe our purpose in god/and to stere our herte to fervoure and deuocion: as thoughe it were the fyrste daye of our conuersion & dayly we shall praye and say thus. Helpe me my lorde Jesu that I maye persevere in good purpose and in thy holy servyce vnto my deth and that I may nowe this present daye perfytely begynne for it is no thynge that I haue done in tyme paste. After our purpose & after our intent shall be our rewarde/& thoughe our intente be neuer so good yet it is necessarye that we put therto a good wyll and a great deligence/for if he that ofte tymes purposeth to do well & to profyte in vertue yet fayleth in his doynge/ what shall he do than that seldō or neuer taketh suche purpose.

Let vs entend to do the best we can / and yet our good purpose may happen to be letted and hyndred in dyuers maners/& our speciall hyndraũce is this /that we so lyghtly leue of oure good exercyses that we haue vsed to doo before tyme/for it is seldome sene that a good custome wylfully broken may be recouered agayne with out great spirituall hyndraũce. The purpose of ryght wyse men dependeth in the grace of god more than in them selfe or ĩ theyr owne wysdome/for man purposeth but god disposeth/ne the waye that man shall walke in this worlde is nat in hym selfe but in the grace of god. If a good custome be somtyme lefte of for helpe of our neyghboure / it maye sone be recouered but if it be lefte of through slouthe or neglygẽce of our selfe it wil hindre vs greatly and hardly wyl it be recouered agayne Thus it apereth that thoughe we incourage our selfe all that we can to do well/ yet we shall lyghtly fayle in many thynges. And neuertheles thoughe we maye nat alway fulfyl it/yet it is good that we alwaye take suche good purpose especially agaynste suche thynges as hyndrethe vs moste / we muste also make dilygente

serthe bothe within vs and without vs that we leue nothynge inordynate vnreformed in vs as nyghe as our fraylte may suffre / & if thou can nat for fraulte of thy selfe do thus contynualy / yet at the leest that thou do it ones on the day euenynge or mornynge. In the mornige thou shalt take a good purpose / for that daye folowynge: and at nyght thou shalt dyscusse dylygently howe thou haste behaued the the daye byfore in worde/in dede / and in thought / for in them we do ofte offende god & our neyghboure. Arme the as christes true knyght with mekenes and charite ayenst all the malyce of the enemye. Refrayne glotony & thou shalte the more lyghtly/refrayne all carnall desyres. Let nat the ghostly enemy fynde the all ydle/ but that thou be redynge/writtyng/ prayynge deuoutly/thynkynge/or some other good laboure doynge/for the cõmynalte. Godely exercyses are to be done secretly: for that that is profytable to one is somtyme hurtfull to a nother/ and also spirituall labours done of deuocion are more surely done in priuite than in open place. And thou muste beware that thou be nat more redy to priuate deuocions than to

them that thou arte bounde to by duetye of thy religion/but whā thy duety is fulfylled than adde therto as thy deuocion gyueth. All maye nat vſe one maner of exercyſe but one in one maner/another in another maner as they ſhall fele to be moſte profytable to them. Alſo as the tyme requyreth ſo dyuers exercyſes are to be vſed/for one maner of exercyſe is neceſſary on the holy daye/another on the ferriall daye/one in tyme of temptacyon another in tyme of peace and conſolacyon/one whā we haue ſwetnes in deuocion/Another whan deuocyon withdrawyeth/Alſo agaynſte prynceppall feaſtes we oughte to be more deligente in good werkes and deuoutly to call for helpe to the bleſſed ſaintes that than be worſhypped in the Churche of god/than in other tymes and to dyſpoſe our ſelfe in lyke maner as if we ſhulde than be taken out of this worlde. And be brought into the euerlaſtynge feaſte in heuen. And ſythe that blyſſe is yet deferred from vs for a tyme we maye well thynke that we be nat yet redy nor worthy to come therto. And therfore we ought to prepayre our ſelfe to be more redye another tyme/for as ſaynte

Luke sayth. ✠ Blessed is that seruaunt whome our Lorde (whā he shall come at the houre of dethe) shall fynde redy/for he shall take hym and lyfte hym vp hyghe a boue all erthly thynges in to the euerlastynge ioye and blesse in the kyndome of heuen. Amen.

¶ Of the loue of onlynes and seylence. The.xx. Chapitre.

SEke for a conuenyent tyme to serche thyne owne conscyence. And thynke ofte on the benefaytes of god / leue of all curyous thynges/And rede suche maters as shall stere the to cōpūccyon of herte for thy synnes rather than to rede onely for occuppenge of the tyme/if thou wilte withdrawe thy selfe frome superfluous wordes ✠ fro vnprofytable rennynges aboute ✠ from herynge of rumours ✠ of vayne tales/thou shalte fynde tyme conuenyent to be occuppyed in holy meditacions. The moste holy men ✠ women that euer were: fledc the company of worldly lyuynge men vpon theyr power/and chace to serue god in secrete of theyr herte / ✠ one holy man sayd

as ofte as I haue bene amonge worldly company I haue departed with lesse fer-uour of spirite thā I came / and that we knowe well whan we talke longe for it is nat so harde to kepe alwaye scylence/ as it is not to excede in wordꝫ whā we speke moch. It is also more lyght to be alway solytary at home / than to go forth in to the worlde and nat offende. Therfore he that intendeth to come to an inwarde set tynge of his herte i god and to haue the grace of deuocion / muste with our sauy-our Christe withdrawe hym frō the peo-ple. No man may surely appere amonge the people / but he that wolde gladly be solitary if he myght/ne no man is sure in prelacy/but he that wolde gladly be a sub get:ne none may surely cōmaūde/ but he that hathe lerned gladly to obey/ ne none ioyeth treuly/but he whose herte wytnes-seth hym to haue a clene conscyence / ne none speketh surely / but he that wolde gladly kepe scylence if he myght. And al-waye the suerte of good men and of bles-sed men hath ben in mekenes and in the drede of god / and thoughe suche blessed men shone in al vertue/ yet they were nat therfore lyfte vp in to pryde / but were

therfore the more deligent in the scrupee of god and the more meke in all theyr doynges/and on the contrary wyse the sure ty of cupll mē ryseth of pryde and of pre sumpciō and i the ende it deceyueth thē. Therfore thynke thy selfe neuer sure in this lyfe wether thou be religious or secu ler/for ofte tymes they that haue ben hol den in the syght of the people moste per fyte:haue bene suffered to fall more gre uously for theyr presumpcion / also it is moche more profytable to many persons that they haue somtyme tēptacions/leste haply they thynke them selfe ouermoche syker and be therby lyfte vp i to pryde or renne to sckynge of outwarde cōsolacion Then that they be alwayes without tem ptaciōs. ✠ O howe pure a cōsciēce shulde he haue that wolde dyspyse all transitory toy/& neuer wyl medle with worldly busy nes/and what peace and inwarde quiet nes shulde he haue that wolde cut awaye from hym all busynes of myndc and only to thynke on heuēly thynges/ no man is worthy to haue ghostely comforetes / but he haue fyrste ben well exercysed in holy compunccīō/ and if thou wylt haue com punccion go in to a secrete place and put

from the all the clamours noyse of the
worlde. ☞ For the prophet Dauid sayth
Let the sorowe for thy synnes be done in
thy secrete Chambre/i thy cell thou shalt
fynde great grace whiche thou mayste
lyghtly lese without. Thy cell well conty
nued shall ware swete and pleasaũt to the
and shall be to the hereafter a ryght dere
frende/and if it be but cupll kepte/it shall
ware very tedyous and yrkesome to the.
But if i the begynnyng thou be ofte ther
in and kepe it well in good prayers and in
holy meditacions it shall be here after to
the a synguler frẽde and one of thy moste
speciall comfortes: in silence and quiet=
nes of herte a deuoute soule profytethe
moche and lerneth the heed sentences of
scripture and fyndeth there: also many
swete teres in deuocion wherwith euery
nyghte she wassheth her myghtely from
all fylth of synne that she may be so moche
the more famylyer with god/as she is dyl
scuered fromc the clamourous noyse of
worldly busynes. Therfore they that for
the loue of vertue withdrawe them from
theyr acquayntaunce/& from theyr world
ly frendes/our lorde with his Angelles
shall drawe nyghe to thẽ and shall abyde

with them. It is better a mā be solytayre and wel take hede of hym selfe. Thā that he do myracles in the worlde forgettyng hym selfe. It is also a laudable thynge in a religious persone / seldome to go forth/ seldom to se other/ & seldome to be sene of other/why wylte thou se that is nat lawfull for the to haue/the worlde passeth awaye with all his concupyscence and deceyuable pleasures. Thy sensual apetyte moueth the to goo abrode:but whan the tyme is paste what beneste thou home agayne but remorse of conscyence and vnquietnes of herte. It is ofte sene that after a mery goynge forth folowyth a heuy retournyng/ & that a glade cuyntyde causeth a heuy mornynge/and so all fleshely ioye entereth pleasūtly /but in the ende it byteth & steeth what mayste thou se with out thy cell that thou mayste nat se within/lo heuen & erthe and all the elementes wherof all erthly thynges be made / and what mayste thou elles where se vnder the sōne that maye lōge endure/ & if thou myghte se all erthly thynges/& also haue all bodely pleasures presēt at ones before the/what were it but a vayne syght:lyfte vp thyne eyene therfore to god in heuen

and praye hertely that thou mayste haue forgyuenes for thy offences / leue vayne thynges to them that wyll be vayne: and take thou hede onely to tho thynges that our lorde commaũdeth the. Shytte faste the dore of thy soule / that is to say thyne ymagynaciõ and kepe it warely from beholdynge of any bodely thynge as moche as thou mayste / & thã lyfte vp thy mynde to thy lorde Jesu & open thy herte faythfully to hym and abyde with hym in thy Cell: for thou shalte nat fynde so moche peace without. If thou haddest not gone forthe so moche as thou haste done / ne haue gyuẽ herynge to vayne tales / thou shuldest haue ben in moche more inward peace thã thou arte / but for as moche as it delyteth the to here newe thynges / it behoueth the therfore to suffer sõtyme both trouble of herte & vnquietnes of mynde.

Of compunccion of the herte. The.xxi. Chapitre.

If thou wylt any thynge profyte to the helthe of thy soule / kepe the alwaye in the drede of god & neuer desyre to be fully at lyberty / but

kepe the alwaye vnder some holsome dy-
scyplyne. Neuer gyue thy selfe to no vn-
discrete myrthe / for no maner of thynge
as nyghe as thou mayste. Haue perfyte
compunccion and sorowe for thy synnes/
and thou shalt fynde therby great inly de
uocion. Cõpũccion openeth to the syghte
of the soule many good thynge/ whiche
lyghtnes of herte and vaine myrthe/sone
dryueth awaye. It is meruayle that any
man can be mery in this lyfe/if he consy-
der wel howe farre he is eryled out of his
countre: and howe great peryll his soule
dayly standeth in/ but through lyghtnes
of herte / and negligence of our defautes
we fele nat: ne we wyl nat fele the sorowe
of our owne soule / but ofte tymes we
laughe whan we ought rather to wepe &
morne/for there is no perfyte lyberty nor
true ioye/but in the drede of god and in a
good conscyence. That persone is ryght
happy that hathe grace to auoyde from
hym all thynges that letteth hym fro be
holdynge of his owne synnes / and that
can tourne hym selfe to god by inwarde
compunccion / and he is happy also that
auoydeth fro hym all thynges that maye
offende or greue his conscience. Fyght

strongly therfore agaynst all synnes and drede nat ouermoche all though thou be encombered by an euyll custome/for that euyll custome maye be ouercome with a good custome. And excuse the nat that thou arte let by other mē:for yf thou wylt leue the familiarite with other:they wyl suffre the to do thy dedȝ without ipedimēt Intryke the nat with other mēnes goodȝ ne busy the nat in great mennes causes/ haue alwaye an eye to thy selfe and dyly-gently enforme & admonysshe thy selfe by fore all other. Yf thou haue nat the fauour of worldly lyuynge people sorowe nat therfore:but be this thy daily sorowe that thou behauyst nat thy selfe in thy cō uersatiō as it besemeth a good relygious person for to do. It is moche expedient & more pfytable that a mā somtyme lacke cōsolacions in his lyfe than that he haue thē alwayes after his wyl namely flesshe ly cōsolatiōs. Neuertheles that we haue nat somtyme heuenly cōsolacions or that we so seldome fele them as we do. It is through our owne defaute:for we seke nat to haue the true cōpunction of herte ne we caste nat fully awaye from vs the false outwarde consolacions: holde thy

selfe therfore vnworthy to haue any con-
solacion and worthy to haue moche try-
bulacion/whan a man sorroweth perfytly
for his synnes /than all worldly comfor-
tes be paynfull to hym. A good man fyn-
deth alway mater ynough why he oweth
ryghtfully to sorowe & wepe / for yf he be
holde hym selfe or yf he thynke on his ney
ghboure / he seeth well that none lyueth
here without great mysery and the more
throughly that he may cõsyder hym selfe.
The more sorowe he hath and alway the
mater af true sorowe and of true inly cõ-
pũction is the remẽbrañce of our synnes
wherwith we be so bylapped on euery
syde that seldome we maye beholde any
ghostly thyngs. But yf we wolde more oft
thynke on our deth than we do on longe
lyfe no doute but we shulde more faruent-
ly apply our selfe to amendement/& I be
leue also that yf we wolde hertely remem
bre the paynes of Helle & of Purgatorye
that we shuld more gladly sustayne all la
bours and sorowes and that we shuld nat
drede any payn in this worlde with that
we myghte auoyde the paynes that are
to come. But for as moche as these thyn-
ges go nat to the herte & we yet loue the

flaterynge and the falſe pleaſures of this worlde / therfore we remayne colde and voyde of deuocion/ and ofte it is through the weykenes of the ſpirite that the wret ched body ſo lyghtly cõplayneth. Praye therfore mekely to our lorde / that he of his great goodnes gyue the / the ſpirite of compunccion / and ſay with the Pro= phete. ✠ Fede me lorde with the brede of cõpũccion/ and gyue me to drynke water of teres in great habundaunce.

¶ Of the conſyderynge of the myſery of mankynde/and wherin the felici= te of man ſtandeth. The. xxii. Chapitre.

Awrecche thou art where ſo euer thou be / & where ſo euer thou tourne the / but thou tourne the to god/why arte thou ſo lyghtly trou bled/ for it falleth nat to the as thou wol deſt and deſyreſt/what is he that hath all thyng after his wyll/neyther thou nor I ne no man lyuynge / for none lyueth here without ſome trouble or anguyſſhe be he kynge or Pope. who thynkeſt thou is in moſte fauour with god/truely he that ſuf

fereth gladly moste for god. But many ꝑ sones weyke and feoble i spirite say thus in theyr hertes. Lo howe good a lyfe that a mā ledeth howe ryche he is/how myghty he is / howe hyghe in auctorite/ howe great in syght of the people/ & howe fayre and beauteous in his bodely kynde / but if thou take hede to the goodnes eucrlastyng/thou shalte wel se that these worldly goodes and worldly lykynges are but lytell worthe & that they be more rather greuous than pleasaunt / for they maye nat be had ne be kepte but by great laboure and busynes of mynde. The felicite of man standeth nat in abundaunce of worldly goodes: for the meane is beste. And verely to lyue in this worlde is but mysery: and the more ghostly that a man wolde be / the more paynfull it is to hym for to lyue: for he feleth the more playnly the defautes of mannes corrupcion / for why: to eate/to drynke/to slepe/ to wake/ to reste/ to laboure / and to serue al other neccssytes of the body is great mysery and great affliccion to a deuoute soule. whiche wolde gladly be fro the boundage of synne that it myghte without lette serue our lorde in purety of cōscience and

in clennes of herte. The inwarde man is greatly greued thrōughe the bodely neces sites in this worlde. ☞ wherfore the pro phete Dauid desyred that he myght be de lyuered fro suche necessites. But wo be to them that knowe nat theyr owne mysery & wo be to them that loue this wretched and this corruptyble lyfe/for some loue it so moche that if they myghte euer lyue here thoughe they myghte porely gette theyr lyuyng with labourc and beggyng/ yet they wolde neuer care for the kyng= dom of heuen. ☞ O madde and vnfayth= full creatures are they that so depely set theyr loue on erthlye thynges that they haue no felynge ne taste but in flesshely pleasures. Truely i the houre of deth they shall knowe howe vyle & howe noughty it was that they so moche loued. But ho ly sayntes & deuoute folowers of Chryste hedede nat what pleased the flesshe / ne what was pleasaūte i syght of the worlde. But all theyr hoole intēt and desyre they helde tho thyngs inuysyble & fered leste by syghte of thynges vysyble they myghte be drawen downe to the loue of them.

☞ My welbeloued brother / lese nat the desyre to profyte in spirituall thyngs / for

thou haste yet good tyme and space. why
wylt thou any lenger dyfferre the tyme.
Aryse & nowe this same instãte begynne
and saye thus/ nowe is tyme to laboure ī
good workes / nowe is tyme to fyghte in
ghostly batayle/ & nowe is tyme to make
amendes for trespas passed / whan thou
art troubled than is beste tyme to merite
and gette rewardes of god. It behoueth
the to go through fyre and water or thou
mayste come to the place of recreacion / &
but thou can fully haue the maystry ouer
thy selfe thou shalt neuer ouercom synne/
ne lyue without great tedyousnes and so
rowe/we wolde gladly be delyuered from
al mysery and sinne/but bycause we haue
throughe synne loste our innocency. we
haue loste also the very ioye and felicite/
wherfore we muste holde vs in pacience
and with good hope abyde the mercy of
god tyll wretchydnes be ouerpassed: and
that this bodely lyfe be chaunged in the
euerlastynge. ❧ O howe great is the frail
ty of man that is euer redy and prone to
synne. This day thou arte confessed and
to morowe thou fallest agayne. Nowe
thou purposeste to be ware and inten-
deste to goo forthe strongely in good

workes & shortly after thou doest as thou neuer haddest taken suche purpose/ryght fully therfore we ought to meke our selfe/ and neuer to thynke in vs any vertue or goodnes: for we be so frayle and so vnstable. Sone may it be loste through neglygence/that with moche labour and special grace was hardly gottē/ but what shal become of vs in the ende wan we so sone wax dull and slowe. Sothely sorowe and wo shall be to vs if we fall to bodely reste nowe as thoughe we were in ghostly sykernes. whan there appereth nat as yet neyther sygne ne tokē of vertu ne of good lyuynge in our conuersacion. wherfore it were expedient to vs that we were yet agayne instructe as nouyces to lerne good maners/if happely there myghte by that meanes be founde hereafter any truste of a amendement and spirituall profyte in our conuersacion. ∴ ∴

Of the remembraunce of deth. The.xxiii. Chapitre.

The houre of dethe wyl shortly come: and therfore take hede howe thou orderest thy selfe/

for the cõmon prouerbe is true: to daye a mã: to morowe none. And whã thou arte out of syght thou art anone out of minde and sone shalte thou be forgotten. O the great dulnes and hardnes of mãnes hert that onely thynketh on thynges presente: and lytell prouydeth for the lyfe to come. If thou dyddest well/thou sholdest so behaue thy selfe in euery dede and in euery thoughte as thou shuldeste this instance dye / if thou haddeste a good conscyence thou shuldest nat moche fere dethe. It were better for the to leue synne than to feare deth. ✠ O my dere brother/ if thou be nat redy this daye/ howe shalt thou be redy to morowe. To morowe is a day vn certayne: & thou canste nat tell whether thou shalte lyue so longe/what profyte is it to vs to lyue longe/whan we therby so lytell amende oure lyfe / longe lyfe dothe nat alwaye brynge vs in to any amendement: but ofte tymes encreaseth more synne / wolde to god that we myghte be one daye well conuersaũt in this worlde. many rekyne theyr yeres of cõuersyon/ & yet there is but lytell frute of amendemẽt ne of any good example sene in theyr conconuersacion/ if it be ferefull to dye pera-

uenture it is more perillous to lyue long: blessed be tho persons that euer haue the houre of deth before theyr eyen: and that euery daye dispose thē selfe to dye/if thou euer sawest any man dye/ remembre that thou muste nedely go the same waye. In the mornynge doute whether thou shalte lyue tyll nyght/and at nyght thynke nat thy selfe sure to lyue tyll on the morowe. Be alway redy & lyue i suche maner that deth fynde the nat vnprouided. Remēber howe many haue dyed sodaynly & vnpuy ded: for our lorde hath called thē in suche houre as they leest went. And whan that laste houre shall come thou shalt beginne to fele al otherwyse of thy lyfe passed/thā thou haste done byfore: & thou shalt than sorowe greatly that thou haste bene so slowe & negligent in the seruice of god as thou haste ben. ¶ O howe happy & wyse is he therfor that laboureth now to stāde in suche state in this lyfe / as he wolde be foūde i at his deth. Truely a perfyte dispi synge of the worlde / & a feruent desyre to profyte in vertue / alone to be taughte a frutefull laboure in workes of penaūce/a redy wyll to obey/ a full forsakyng of our selfe/& a wylfull sufferynge of all aduersi-

tes for the loue of god / shall gyue vs a
great truste that we shall dye wel. Nowe
whyleste thou arte in helth thou mayst do
many good dedes / but if thou be sycke I
can nat tell what thou mayst do/ for why
fewe be amended throughe sycknes/ & in
lyke wyse they that go moche on pylgry-
mage be seldome therby made perfyte &
holy / put nat thy truste in thy frendes &
thy neighboures/ne differre nat thy good
dedes tyll after thy deth for thou shalt so-
ner be forgotten than thou wenyste / bet-
ter it is to prouyde for thy selfe betyme &
sẽde some good ded̃ byfor the/thã to tru-
ste to other that pauẽtur wyl lyghtly for-
get the/ if thou be nat nowe busye for thy
selfe & for thyn owne soule helth: who shal
be busye for the after thy dethe. Nowe is
the tyme very precious / but alas for so-
rowe that thou spendest the tyme so vn-
profitable: i the which thou sholdest wynne
the lyfe euerlastyng. The tyme shal come
whan thou shalte desyre one daye or one
houre to amende the/but I wot nat whe
ther it shalbe graũted vnto the. ¶ O my
dere brother fro howe great peryl & drede
myghtest thou nowe delyuer thy selfe / if
thou woldest alwaye in this lyfe drede to

offēde god/and alwaye haue the cōmyng of deth ſuſpecte. Therfore ſtudy nowe to lyue ſo that at the houre of dethe thou mayſte rather ioy than drede/ lerne nowe to dye to the worlde that thou mayſte thā lyue with Chriſte/lerne alſo to diſpyſe all worldly thynges that thou mayſte than frely go to Chriſte/ chaſtice nowe thy bo= dy with penaunce that thou mayſte than haue a ſure and a ſtedfaſte hope of ſalua= cion. Thou arte a fole if thou thynke to lyue longe: ſyghe thou arte nat ſyker to lyue one daye to the ende/ howe many ha ue bene deceyued throughe truſte of long lyfe/and ſodeynly haue bene taken out of this worlde or they had thoughte/ how e ofte haſte thou herde ſay that ſuche a mā was ſlayne/ and ſuche a man was drow= ned: and ſuche a man fell and brake his necke/this man as he eat his meate was ſtrangled/and this mā as he played toke his dethe/one with fyre: another with y= ren:another with ſyckenes: and ſome by theefte haue ſodeynly peryſhed/ and ſo the ende of all mē is dethe/ for the lyfe of mā as a ſhadowe ſodaynly ſlydeth & paſſethe awaye/Thynke ofte who ſhall remembre the after thy dethe/and wo ſhal praye for

the/and do nowe for thyselfe al that thou canste / for thou wotteste nat whan thou shalte dye nor what shall folowe after thy deth: whyleste thou hast tyme gather the riches immortall / thynke nothyng abydyngly but on thy ghostly helth. Set thy study onely on thynges that be of god and that belonge to his honoure. Make the frendes agaynst that tyme/ worshipe his saynts and folowe theyr steppes/that whan thou shalte go out of this worlde / they may receyue the in to the euerlastig tabernacles. Kepe the as a pylgrime and as a straunger here in this worlde / to whome nothynge belongeth of worldely busynes/kepe thy herte fre alway lyft vp to god/for thou hast no cite here longe abydyng/ sende thy desyres and thy dayly prayers alway vpwarde to god: & praye perseuerantly that thy soule at the houre of deth/may blessedly departe out of this worlde and go to Christe.

¶ Of the laste Jugement/and of the payne that is ordeyned for synne. The.xxiiii. Chapitre.

IN all thynges beholde the ende/and ofte remēber howe thou shalt stāde

before the hygh Juge to whome nothing is hyd: whiche wyll nat be pleased with rewardes ne receyue any maner excuses/ but in all thyng wyll iuge that is ryghtwyse and true. O most vnwyse and most wretched synner what shalt thou thā answere to god/whiche knoweth all thy sinnes & wretchednes/syth thou dredest here somtyme the face of a mortall man/why dost thou nat nowe prouyde for thy selfe against that day/sith thou mayst nat thā be excused ne defended by none other. But euery man shall thā haue ynough to do/ to answere for hym selfe. Nowe thy laboure is fruitfull/ thy wepyng is acceptable/thy mournyng is worthy to be herde/ and thy sorowe also is satisfactory & pourgyng of synnes. The patient mā whiche suffereth of other iniuryes and wronges/ and yet neuertheles sorroweth more for theyr malyce than for the wrong done to hym selfe/ hath a holsome and a blessed purgatory in this worlde/ and so haue they that gladly can praye for theyr enemyes/ and for them that be contrarious vnto thē/ and that in theyr herte can forgyue those that offende thē and tary nat longe to aske forgyuenes. And so haue

they alſo that moze lyghtly be ſtyred to mercy thā to vengeaūce/and that can as it were by a vyolence bzeke downe theyr owne wyll and ſtrōgly reſyſte ſynne/ and labour alway to ſubdue their body to the ſpirite. It is better nowe to purge ſynne and to put away vyce thā to reſerue it to be purged herafter/but verily we deceyue our ſelfe by inozdinate loue that we haue to our bodily kynde/what ſhall the fyze of purgatozy deuoure: but thy ſynne truely nothing. Therfoze the moze thou ſpareſt thy ſelfe nowe / & the moze thou folowеſt thy fleſſhely lykyng / the moze greuouſly ſhalt thou waple herafter/ & the moze mater thou reſerueſt foz the fyze of purgatozy. In ſuche thyngs as a man moſt hath offended ſhall he moſte be punyſſhed: the ſlouthful plons ſhalbe there pricked with bzēnyng pzyckes of yron / and glotons ſhalbe tozmented with great hunger and thurſte. The lecherous perſones and louers of voluptuous pleaſures ſhalbe fulfylled with bzēnyng pyche & bzymſtone. And enuyous perſones ſhall wale and howle as doth woode dogges. There ſhall no Synne be without hys pzoper tourmente. The pzowde man ſhalbe

fulfylled with all shame and confusyon / and the coueytous mā shalbe pyned with penury & nede / one houre there in payne shalbe moze greuous thā here a hundzeth yere in moste sharpest penaunce. There shalbe no rest ne consolacion to dampned soules. But here somtyme we fele releſe of our paynes and haue somtyme consolacion of our frendes. Be nowe sozowfull foz thy synnes: that at the day of Jugement thou mayste be syker with blessed sayntes. Than shall ryghtwyse mē stāde in great cōstaunce agaynst thē that haue wzonged them and oppzessed them here. Thā shall he stande as a Juge that here submytteth hym selfe meekely to the juge ment of man. Than shall the meke poore man haue great confydence and truste in god and the obstinate pzoude man shall quake and dzede. Than shall it appere that he was wyse in this wozlde/that foz the loue of god was cōtented to be taken as a foole & to be dispised & set at nought. Than shall it also please hym moche the trybulacion that he suffered pacientlyin this wozlde/and all wyckednes shall stop his mouth. Than euery deuoute person shalbe ioyfull and glade: and the vnreli-

gious persons shall wayle & drede. Than shall the flesshe that hathe ben with discresion chastisyde ioye more / Than if it had ben nourisshed with all delectacion and pleasure. Than shall the vyle habite shyne clere in the syght of god: and the precious garmentes shall ware foule and lothsome to beholde: Than the poore cotage shalbe more alowed thā the palayes ouer gylted with golde. Than shall more helpe a constante pacience/ thā all worldly power and ryches. Than shall meke obedience be exalted more hyghe/ thā all worldly wysdome and polacye/and than shall a good clene conscyence make vs more gladsome and mery / than the connyng of all philosophy. Than the dispysyng of worldly goodꝫ shalbe more of valure thā all worldly ryches and treasure. Than shalte thou haue more conforte for thy deuoute prayng/than for all thy delycate fedyng. Than shalte thou also ioye more for thy sylence keppnge / than for thy longe talkyng and iangelyng. Than good dedes shall plentyously be rewarded / and fayre wordes shall lytell be regarded. Thā shall it please more a strayt lyfe and harde penaunce here / than all

worldly delectacion and pleasure. Lerne nowe therfore to suffre the small trybulacions in this worlde that thou mayst thā be delyuered frō the greater there ordeyned for synne/ Fyrste proue here what thou mayst suffre herafter. And if thou mayst nat nowe suffre so lytell a payne/ howe shalte thou thā suffre the euerlastig torment̄/ and if nowe so lytell a passyon make the ipacient what shall than do the intollerable fyre of purgatory or of hell. Thou mayst nat haue two heuens/ that is to say/to ioye here & to haue delectacīō here/& after to ioy also with Christe i heuen. More ouer if thou haddest lyued alway vnto this daye in honoures & in flesshely delectacions: what shulde it profyte the nowe if thou shuldest this present instaunte departe the worlde. Therfore all thing is vanite: but to loue god & to serue him/he that louethgod with all his herte dredeth neyther deth / torment̄ / iugement̄/ ne hell / for a parfyte loue maketh a sure passage to god / but if a man yet delyteth i synne: it is no meruaile though he drede both deth & hel. And though suche a dred be but a thrale drede / yet neuertheles it is good that if the loue of god withdrawe

vs nat frō synne/that the drede of hell cō
strayne vs therto: he that setteth aparte
the drede of god / may nat long stande in
the state of grace / but sone shall he renne
in to the snare of the fende and lyghtly
shall he therwith be deceyued.

¶ Of the feruente amendyng of all our lyfe / and that we shall specially take hede of our owne soule helth before all other. The.xxv. Chapitre.

Yf sone be walking and diligēte in the seruyce of god/ & thynke oft wherfore thou arte come/ & why thou hast forsakē the worlde/ was it nat that thou shuldest lyue to god and be made a spirituall man=yes truely. Therfore stryue thy selfe to perfection for in shorte tyme thou shalte receyue the full rewarde of all thy labours/ and from thensforth shall neuer come to the sorowe nor drede: thy labour shall be lytell and shorte/and thou shalte receyue therfore agayne euerlastyng reste and comforte: yf thou abyde faythfull and feruente in good dedes / without doute our lorde wyll be fayth=full and lyberall to the in his rewardes.

Thou shalte alway haue a good truste that thou shalte come to the palme of victory / but thou shalte nat set the in a full sykernes therof lest haply thou ware dul and proude in herte. A certayne persone whiche oftymes douted whether he were in the state of grace or not/ on a tyme fel prostrate in the churche and sayd thus. ☞ O that I myght knowe whether I shuld perseuer in vertue to the ende of my lyfe. ☞ And anone he herde inwardly in his soule the answere of our Lorde saing what woldest thou do if thou kneweste thou shuldest persuer: do nowe as thou woldest do than/ and thou shalte be saufe and so anon he was conforted and cõmitted him selfe hooly to the wyll of god and all his doutfulnes ceassed/ and neuer after wolde he curiously serche to knowe what shulde be come of hym/ but rather he studied to knowe what was the wyll of god agaynste hym / and howe he myght begynne & ende all his dedes that he shulde do to the pleasure of god and to his honoure. Truste in god and do good dedes sayth the prophete Dauid: Inhabite the erth and thou shalte be fedde with the ryches of thy good dedes. But one thynge

withdrawethe many from profytynge in vertue and from amendemēt of lyfe/ that is an horroure and a false worldly drede that they may nat abyde the payne and labour that is nedefull for the gettynge therof. Therfore they shall moste profyte in vertue before all other that enforce thē selfe myghtely to ouercome tho thynges that be most greuous and moste contrarious to thē. For a man profyteth there most & there wynneth most grace where he most ouercōmeth him selfe and wherin he most mortefyeth his body to the soule. But all men haue nat in lyke moche to mortefye and ouercome: for some haue mo passyons than some haue. Neuertheles a feruente louer of god thoughe he haue more greater passyons than other/ yet shall he be more stronger to profyte in vertue than a nother that is better manered and that hath fewer passyons but he is lesse feruent to vertue. Two thynges helpe a man moche to amendemēt of lyfe that is a myghty withdrawyng of hym selfe from tho thyngs that the body most inclyneth hym to/ and a feruent labour for suche vertuous as he hath moste nede of. Studye also to ouercome in thy selfe

tho thyngꝫ that most myslyke the ī other men. And take alwaye some speciall profyte in euery place where so euer thou become/ as if thou se any good example enforce the to folowe it / and if thou se any euyll example loke thou eschewe it / as thy eye consydereth the workes of other/ ryght so and in the same wyse thy workꝫ be consydered of other. O howe ioyous and howe delectable is it to se religious men deuoute & feruente in the loue of god well manered and well taught in ghostly lernyng/ and on the contrary wyse howe heuy and sorowfull is it to se them lyue inordinately nat vsyng tho thinges that theyhaue chosen and taken them to. Also howe inconuenient a thynge is it a man to be neclgent in the purpose of his fyrste callyng. And to set his mynde to thyngꝫ that be nat cōmytted to hym. Thynke ofte therfore on the purpose that thou haste taken / and set before the eye of thy soule the mynde of Christes passyon/and if thou beholde well and diligently his blessed lyfe thou mayste well be a shamed that thou hast nomore conformed the to hym than thou hast done/he that wyll in wardely and deuoutely exercise hym selfe

in the moſt bleſſed lyfe and paſſion of our lorde Jeſu Chriſte / ſhalte fynde therin plentuouſly all that is neceſſary for hym ſo that he ſhal nat nede to ſeke any thing without hym. O if Jeſu crucifyed were ofte in our hertes and in our remẽbraũce we ſhulde ſone be lerned in all thynges that be neceſſarye for vs. A good religious man that is feruente in his religion taketh all thynge well and doth gladly all that he is cõmaunded to do. But a religious perſone that is necligente and ſlouthfull hath trouble vpon trouble and ſuffereth greate anguyſſhe and payne on euery ſyde / for he lacketh the true inwarde comforte: and to ſeke the outwarde comforte he is prohibited. Therfore a religious perſone that lyueth without diſcipline: is lyke to fall to greate ruyne. Alſo he that in religion ſeketh to haue lybertye and releſſyng of his ducty ſhall alwaye be in anguiſſhe and ſorowe/ for one thyng or other ſhal euer dyſpleaſe hym. Therfore take hede howe other religious pſons do that be right ſtraytly kepte vnder the rules of theyr religion. They go ſeldome forth/they lyue hardly/ they eate poorely / & be clothed groſſely /

they laboure moche/ speke lytell/ watche longe/ryse erly/make longe prayers/rede ofte and kepe them selfe alwaye in some holsome doctryne. Beholde the Chartusiences and the Cysteux and many other Monkes/ and Nunnes of dyuers religious/Howe they ryse euery nyght to serue our lorde. And therfore it were greate shame to the that thou shuldeste ware slowe and dull in so holy a warke where so many laude and prayse our lorde. ¶O howe ioyous a lyfe were it if we shulde nothyng els do but with herte & mouthe contynually to prayse our lorde / nowe truely if we shulde neuer nede to eate/ drinke/ne slepe but that we might alway laude hym: and onely take hede to spirituall studyes/ than were we moche more happy and blessed thā we are nowe whā we are bounden of necessyte to serue the body. O wolde to god that these bodyly merites were tourned in to spirituall refections whiche alas for sorowe we taste but seldome/whā a man is cōmen to that perfection that he seketh nat his consolation in any creature / than begynneth god fyrste to sauer swete vnto hym / and than he shalbe cōtented with euery thyng

that cõmeth be it lykyng or mysliykyng. And thã he shall nat be glad for no worldly profyte be it neuer so greate: ne sory for the wantynge of it / for he hath set hym selfe & stablysshed hym selfe hooly in god the whiche is to hym all in all/to whome nothynge perisshyth nor dyeth / but all thynge lyueth to hym and serueth hym without cessynge after his byddynge. In euery thynge remembre the ende & that tyme loste can nat be called agayne with out laboure and diligence thou shalte neuer get vertue. If thou begynne to be negligent thou begynnest to be feble and weyke / but if thou aplye the to fauoure/ thou shalte fynde great helpe of god and for the loue of vertue thou shalte fynde lesse payne in all thy labours than thou dyddest fyrste / he that is feruent and louyng: is alwaye quycke and redy to all thyngs that be of god and to his honour. It is more laboure to resyste vyces and passyons / than it is to swynke & swete in bodyly labours/he that wyll nat fle smal synnes: shall by lytell and lytell fall into greater. Thou shalte alway be glade at nyght whan thou hast spent the daye before fruitefully. Take hede to thy selfe

and fyre thy selfe alway to deuocion admonysshe thy selfe and what so euer thou do of other forget nat thy selfe / and so moche shalte thou profyte in vertue as thou canst breke thyne owne wyll and folowe the wyll of God.

✠ Here begynneth the seconde boke of inwarde Conuersacion.

The fyrste Chapitre.

The kyngdome of god is within you sayth Christe our sauyoure. Tourne the therfore with al thyherte to god & forsake this wretched worlde / & thy soule shall fynde great inwarde reste. Lerne to dispise outwarde thynges and gyue thy selfe to inwarde thyngs and thou shalte se the kyngdome of god come in to thy soule. The kyngdome of god is peace and ioye in the holy ghoste that is nat graunted to wycked people/our lorde Jesu Christe wyll come to the & wyll shewe to the his cōsolacions if thou wylte make redy for hym within forth a dwellyng place/and all that he desyreth in the is withinforth/ and there is his pleasure to be. There is betwyxte almyghty god and a deuoute soule many ghostly vysytynges / swete inwarde spekynge: great gyftes of grace many consolacyons/ moche heuenly peace and wonderous familiarite of the blessed presence of god. Therfore thou faythfull

soule prepayre thy herte to Christe thy spouse: that he may come to the & dwell in the/ for he sayth hym selfe. ☞ who so loueth me: shall kepe my cōmaundemēt. And my father and I and the holy ghost shall come to hym and we shall make in hym our dwellyng place. Syue therfore to Christe fre entre in to thy herte: and kepe out all thynges that letteth his entre: and whan thou haste hym thou arte ryche ynough and he onely shall suffyce to the / and than he shalbe thy prouyder and defender and thy faythfull helper in euery necessyte: so that thou shalte nat nede to put thy truste in any other without hym/man is sone chaunged & lyghtly falleth away / but Christe abydeth for euer and stādeth strongly with his louer vnto the ende. There is no greate truste to be put in man that is but mortall and fraple thoughe he be ryght moche profytable and also moche beloued vnto the/ ne any great heuynes to be takē though he somtyme tourne and be agaynste the/ for they that this day be with the to morowe may happen to be agaynst the and may ofte tourne as doth the wynde: put thy ful truste therfore in god/and let him

be thy loue and drede aboue all thynges: and he wyll answere for the and wyll do for the in all thynges as shalbe most nedefull and moste expedient for the. Thou haste here no place of long abydyng / for where so euer thou be come thou arte but a straunger and a pylgryme and neuer shalte thou fynde parfyte reste tyll thou be fully oned to god/why doste thou loke to haue reste here syth this is nat thy restyng place/ thy full reste muste be in heuē ly thynges / and all erthly thynges thou muste beholde as thynges transitory and shortly passyng away/ and be well ware thou cleue nat ouer moche to them: leste thou be taken with loue of them and in the ende perisshe therby. Let thy thought be alwaye vpwarde to god: and dyrecte thy prayers to Christe contynually / and if thou may nat for fraylte of thy selfe alwaye occupye thy mynde in contemplacion of the godhede: Be than occupyed with mynde of his passyon: and in his blessed woundes make the a dwellynge place / and if thou fle deuoutely to the woundes of Christes syde and to the markes of his passyon thou shalte fele greate cōforte in euery trouble. And shalte lyrell

force thoughe thou be openly dispised in the worlde/ and what cuyll wordꝫ so euer be spoken of the they shal lytell greue the Our maister Christe was dispised in the worlde of all men and in his moste nede was forsaken of his acquayntaunce and frendes and lefte amonge shames and rebukes. He wolde suffre wronges and be nought set by of the worlde: and we wyll nat that any persone do vs wronge ne disprayse our dedes. Christe had many aduersaries and backebytoures / and we wolde haue all to be our frendes and louers: Howe shulde thy pacience be crowned in heuen. If no aduersytye shulde byfall to the in erthe: if thou wylte suffre none aduersytie: howe mayst thou be the frende of Christe. It behoueth the to suffre with Christe / and for Christe if thou wylte reygne with Christe. Truely if thou haddest ones entred in to the blody woundes of Jesu: and haddest there tasted a lytell of his loue/thou shuldest lytell care for lykynges or myslykynges of the worlde / but thou shuldeste rather haue great ioye whan wronges and reproues were done vnto the / for perfyte loue of god maketh a man perfytely to dispyse

hym selfe. The true inwarde loue of god that is fre from all mordynate affections may anon tourne hym selfe frely to god/ and lyfte hym selfe vp in spirite in cõtemplacion & frutefully reste hym in Christe. Also he to whome all thynges be estemed as they be/ and nat as they be taken and thought to be of worldly people / is very wyse & is rather taught of god thã of mã And he that can inwardly lyfte his minde vpwarde to god & can lytell regarde outwarde thingꝫ nedeth nat to seke for tyme or place to go to prayers: or to do other good dedes or vertuous occupacions. For the ghostly mã may sone gather hym selfe together and fyre his mynde in god / for he neuer suffereth it to be fully occupyed in outwarde thynges. And therfore his outwarde labours and his worldely occupacions necessary for the tyme/ hyndre hym nat but lytell / for as they come so he applyeth hym selfe to them and referreth thẽ alway to the wyll of god. More ouer a man that is well ordered in his soule/forsethlytel the vnkynde demeanor of worldly people ne yet theyr proude behauoure. As moche as a man loueth any worldly thig more thã it shuld be beloued

so moche his mynde is hyndred and letted for the true ordynate loue that he shulde haue to god: if thou were wel purged fro all inordinate affections / than what so euer shulde befall to the shulde tourne to thy ghostly profyte and to the great encreasyng of grace and vertue in thy soule/but the cause why so many thinges displease the and trouble the / is for thou arte nat yet parfytely dede to the worlde:ne thou arte nat yet fully seuered from the loue of erthly thynges / and no thynge so moche defouleth the soule: as an vnclene loue to creatures/ if thou forsake to be cõforted by worldly thynges outwardly thou mayst beholde more parfytely heuenly thynges and thou shalte than syng contynually laudes and prayenges to hym with greate ioye and inwarde gladnes of herte. The whiche graunte the and me the blessed Trinite. Amen.

Of a meke knowyng of our owne defautes. The.ii. Chapitre.

REgarde nat moche who is with the:nor who is agaynst the/but be this thy greateste study that

god may be with the in euery thyng that thou dost/haue a good conscyence and he shall well defende: and who so euer he wyll helpe and defende there may no malyce hynder ne greue: if thou can be styll and suffre a whyle thou shalte without doute se the helpe of god come in thy nede he knoweth the tyme and place howe to delyuer the/ and therfore thou muste resygne thy selfe hooly to hym. It perteyneth to hym to helpe and to delyuer frō all confusyon. Neuertheles it is ofte tymes moche profytable to vs for the more surer keppnge of mekenes/ that other men knowe our defautz and reproue vs of them. whan a man meketh hym selfe for his offences/ he lyghtly pleaseth other and lyghtly reconcileth hym selfe to them that he hath offended. The meke man/ almyghty god defendeth and comforteth: to hym he inclyneth hym selfe and sendeth hym great plēty of his grace to hym: also he sheweth his secretes and louyngly he draweth hym to hym/ and after his oppressyons he lyfteth hym vp to glory. The meke man whan he hathe suffered cōfusyon and reproue/is in good peace: for he trusteth in god and nat in

the worlde. Moreouer if thou wylt come to the hyghnes of perfection: thynke nat thy selfe any thynge profyted in vertue tyll thou can fele mekelyn thy herte that thou haste lesse mekenes and lesse vertue than any other hath.

Howe good it is for a man to be peacefull. The.iii. Chapitre.

FIrste put thyselfe in peace/and than thou mayst the better pacifye other/a peacefull mā and a pacient profiteth more to hym selfe and to other also: thā a man well lerned that is unpeacefull. A man that is passionate tourneth ofte tymes good in to cuyll and lyghtly beleueth the worse parte. But a good peacefull man tourneth all thynge to the best: and hath suspeccion to no mā/ but he that is nat contente is ofte troubled with many suspicions: and neyther is he quyet hym selfe/nor yet sufferyth he other for to be quiet/he speketh oft times that he shulde nat speke/and he omytteth to speke/that were more expedient to be spoken: he consydereth greatlye what other be bounden to do/ but to that that

he is bounden to hym selfe he is full negligent / haue therfore fyrste a zele and a respecte to thy selfe and to thyne owne soule/and thā thou mayst the more right wysely and with the more due order of charite haue zele vpon thy neighbourers. Thou arte anon redy to excuse thyne owne defautes / but thou wylte nat here the excuses of thy brethern. Truely it were more charitable and more profytable to the that thou shuldest accuse thy selfe and excuse thy brother: For if thou wylte be borne here other/beholde howe farre thou arte yet fro perfyte mekenes & charite: whiche can nat be angrye with none but with them selfe. It is no great thynge to be well cōuersante with good men & with tractable men: for that naturally pleaseth all people / and euery man gladly hath peace with thē & most loueth them that folowe their appetite / but to lyue peacybly with cuyll men & with froward men that lacke good maners & be vntaught & that be also cōtrarious vnto vs/ is a great grace and a māly dede and moche to be praised for it can nat be done but through great ghostly strēgth. Som persones can be quyet thē selfe & also can

lyue quyetly with other / and some can nat be quyet thē selfe: ne yet suffre other to be quyet/they be greuous to other/but they be more greuous to them selfe. And some can kepe them selfe in good peace / and can also bring other to lyue in peace/ and neuertheles all our peace whyles we be in this mortall lyfe: standeth more in meke sufferyng of troubles and of thingꝫ that be contraryous vnto vs: than in the nat felyng of thē. For no man may lyue here without some trouble. And therfore he that can beste suffre shall haue moste peace/ and is very true ouercome of hym selfe / the lorde of the worlde / the frende of Christe/and the true enheritour of the kyngdome of heuen.

Of a pure mynde and a symple intente. The.iiii.Chapitre.

MAn is borne vp frō erthly thinges with two wynges/ that is to say: with plaines and clēnes plaines is in the intente / and clennes is in the loue / the good true & playnne intente loketh towarde god / but the clene loue taketh assay & tasteth his swetnes.

If thou be fre from all inordinate loue there shall no good dede hynder the / but that thou shalte therwith encrease in the waye of perfection. If thou entende well and seke nothynge but god and the profyte of thyne owne soule and of thy neighboures/ thou shalte haue greate inwarde lybertye of mynde. And if thy herte be strayte with god: Than euery creature shalbe to the a myrrour of lyfe and a boke of holy doctryne/ for there is no creature so lytell ne so vyle: but that it sheweth and representeth the goodnes of god. Also if thou were withinforth i thy soule pure and clene / thou shuldest than without lettyng take all thynges to the beste. A clene herte perceth both heuē and hel. Suche as a man is in his conscyence inwardly/ suche he sheweth to be by his outwarde cōuersacion. If there be any true tope in this worlde: that hath a man of a clene cōscience. And if there be anywhere trybulacion or angusshe: an cuyll conscyence knoweth it best. Also as yron put in to the fyre is clensed fro ruste and is made all clene and pure / ryght so a man tournyng hym selfe hooly to god is purged fro slouthfulnes & sodeynly is chas-

ged in to a newe man. whan a man begynneth to ware dull & slowe to ghostly busynes/than a lytell labour fereth hym greatly / and than he taketh gladly outwarde cõfortes of the worlde and of the flesshe/but whan he begynneth perfytely to ouercome hym selfe & to walke strõgly in the waye of god/ thã he regardeth tho labours but lytel/that before he thought were ryght greuous and as importable vnto hym.

☙ Of the knowynge of our selfe. The.v.Chapitre. ❧

We may nat truste moche i our selfe: ne in our owne wyt / for oft tymes through our presumpcion we lacke grace: and ryght lytell lyght of true vnderstandyng is in vs / and that we haue many tymes / we lese through our negligence/ and yet we se nat: ne we wyll nat se howe blynde we are. Ofte tymes we do euyll / and in defence therof we do moche worse/and somtyme we be moued with passyon and we wene it be of a zele to god / we can anone reprene small defautes in oure neyghbours: but our

owne defautes that be moche greater we wyll nat se / we fele anone and ponder greately what we suffre of other / but what other suffre of vs we wyll nat consyder / but he that wolde well and ryghtwysely iuge his owne defautes: shulde nat so rigourously iuge the defautes of his neyghbours. A man that is inwardly tourned to god taketh hede of himselfe before all other / and he that can well take hede of hym selfe: can lyghtly be styll of other mēnes dedes. Thou shalte neuer be an inwarde man and a deuoute folower of Christe / but thou can kepe the fro medelynge of other mennes dedes and can specially take hede of thyne owne. If thou take hede hooly to god and to thy selfe / the defautes that thou seest in other shall lytell moue the. where arte thou whan thou arte nat presente to thy selfe / and whan thou haste all renne aboute and moche haste consydered other mēnes workes. what haste thou profyted therby if thou haue forgotē thy selfe: if thou wylte therfore haue peace in thy soule and be perfytely oned to god in blessed louc / set a parte all other mēnesdedes and onely set thy selfe & thyne owne

dedes before the eye of thy soule/and that thou seest amysse in the: shortely to reforme it. Thou shalte moche profyte in grace if thou kepe the fre frō al temporal cures / and it shall hynder the greately if thou set prycc by any temporal thynges. Therfore let nothynge be in thy syght hyghe/nothyng great/nothynge lykyng ne acceptable to the/but it be purely good or of good. Thynke all comfortes vayne that come to the by any creature/ he that loueth god and his owne soule for god: dispiseth all other loue for he seeth well that god alone whiche is eternall incōprehensible and that fulfylleth all thyngs with his goodnes/ is the hole solace and cōforte of the soule: and that he is the very true gladnes of herte and none other but onely he.

¶ Of the gladnes of a clene cōscyence. The. vi. Chapitre.

THe glorye of a good man / is the wytnesse of god: that he hath a good conscyence/haue therfore a good conscyence & thou shalte alway haue gladnes. A good cōscyence

may bere many wronges and is euer mery and glade in aduersyties/ but an euyll cōscyence is alway ferefull and vnquiet. Thou shalte reste the swetely and blessedly: if thyne owne herte reproue the nat. Be neuer glade but whan thou hast done well. Euyll men haue neuer perfyte gladnes: ne they fele no inwarde peace. For our lorde sayth: ☞ There is no peace to wycked people. And thoughe they say we be in good peace there shall no euyll come to vs. Lo who may greue vs or hurte vs / byleue them nat: for sodeynly the wrath of god shall fall vpon thē but they amende/and all that they haue done shall tourne to nought / and that they wolde haue done shall be vndone. It is no greuous thynge to a feruente louer of god to ioye in trybulacion/ for all his ioy and glorye is to ioye in the crosse of our lorde Jesu Christe: It is a shorte glorye that is gyuen by man:and comenly some heuynes foloweth shortly after. The ioye and gladnes of good mē is in theyr owne conscyence/and the ioye of ryghtwysemē is in god / and of god / and theyr ioye is in vertue & in good lyfe he that desyreth the very perfyte ioye that is euerlastyng/

setteth lytell prycc by temporall ioy/ and he that seketh any worldly ioye or doth nat in his herte fully dispyse it / sheweth hym selfe openly to loue but lytell the ioy of heuen. He hath great tranquilite and peace of herte that neyther regardeth prayses ne dispraises. And he shall sone be pacifyed and cõtent that hath a good conscyence. Thou arte nat the better for thou arte praysed: ne the worse for thou arte dispraysed / for as thou arte: thou arte/and what so euer be said of the: thou arte no better than almyghty god whiche is the sercher of mãnes herte wyll wytnes the to be / if thou beholde well what thou arte inwardly: thou shalt nat care moche what the worlde speketh of the outwarde. Man seeth the face/ but god beholdeth the herte. Man beholdeth the dede/ but god beholdeth the intent of the dede. It is a great token of a meke herte: A man euer to do well/ and yet to thynke hym selfe to haue done but lytell. And it is a great sygne of clennes of lyfe and of an inwarde truste in god whan a man taketh nat his cõforte of any creature: whan a man seketh no outwarde wytnes for hym selfe/it appereth that he

hath hooly cõmytted hym selfe to god.
☞ Also after the wordes of saint Paule: He that cõmendeth hym selfe is nat iustified/but he whome god cõmendeth: and he that hath his mynde alwaye lyfte vp to god / and is nat bounden with any inordinate affection withoutforth/is in the degre and in the state of a holy and a blessed man.

☞ Of the loue of Jesu aboue all thinges. The. vii. Chapitre.

BLessed is he that knoweth howe good it is to loue Jesu / and for his sake to dispise hym selfe. It behoueth the louer of Jesu to forsake all other loue besyde hym / for he wyll be loued only aboue al other. The loue of creatures is deceyuable and faylyng/ but the loue of Jesu is faythfull & alwayes abydynge / he that cleueth to any creature muste of necessyte fayle as doth the creature / but he that cleueth abydingly to Jesu shalbe made stable in hym for euer. Loue hym therfore & holde hym thy frende for whã all other forsake the he wyll nat forsake the ne suffre the finally to perisshe Thou muste of necessyte be departed frõ

thy frendes and from all mānes cōpanye whether thou wylte or nat and therfore kepe the with thy lorde Jesu lyuyng and dyeng and cōmyt the to his fydelite and he wyll be with the and helpe the whan all other forsake the. Thy beloued is of suche nature that he wyl nat admyt any other loue / for he wyll haue alonely the loue of thy herte and wyll syt therin as a kyng in his proper throne. If thou coudest well auoyde frō the: the loue of creatures / he wolde alwaye abyde with the and neuer wolde he forsake the. Thou shalte in maner fynde it all as loste what so euer truste thou haste put in any maner of thynge besyde Jesu / put nat thy truste therfore to suche thyngs as is but a quel ful of wynde or as a holowe stycke whiche is nat able to sustcyne the: ne to helpe the / but in thy moste nede wyll deceyue the/ for man is but as hay/ and all his glory is as a floure in the felde/ whiche sodeynly vanysheth & flydeth away. If thou take hede onely to the outwarde apparaunce thou shalte sone be deceyued and if thou seke thy cōforte in any thyng but in Jesu/ thou shalte fele therby great spirituall losse. But if thou seke in all

thynges thy lorde Jesu/thou shalt truely fynde thy lorde Jesu/and if thou seke thy selfe thou shalte fynde thy selfe/but that shall be to thyne owne great losse/for truly a man is more greuous and more hurt full to hym selfe if he seke nat his lorde Jesu: than is all the worlde/and more than all his aduersaries may be.

☙ Of the familier frendshype of Jesu. The.viii.Chapitre.

When our lorde Jesu is presente all thyng is lyghynge and nothynge semeth harde to do for his loue/but whā he is absēte all thynge that is done for his louc/is paynfull and harde/whan Jesu speketh nat to the soule there is no faythfull consolacion/but if he speke but one worde onely/the soule feleth great inwarde comforte/dyd nat mary Magdalyne ryse sone from wepyng whan Martha shewed her that her mayster Christe was nyghe and called her:pes truely.

✠ O that is an happy houre whā Jesus called vs from wepyng to ioye of spirite. Remembre howe dyre and howe vndeuoute thou arte without Jesu/and howe

vnwyse/howe vayne/and howe cõynge thou arte whan thou desyrest any thyng besyde Jesu. Truely that desyre is more hurtfull to the:than if thou haddest loste al the worlde/ what may this worlde gyue the:but throughe the helpe of Jesu. To be without Jesu is a payne of hell. And to be with Jesu is a pleasaũt paradyse:if Jesu be with the/ there may no enemye greue the/and he that fyndeth Jesu fyndeth a great treasure that is beste aboue all other treasures/& he that leseth Jesu leseth very moche and more than all the worlde/he is most poore that lyueth with out Jesu/& he is moste ryche that is with Jesu. It is great cõynge to be well cõuersaunt with Jesu/ and to kepe hym is ryght great wisdom/ be meke & peacefull & Jesu shal be with the/be deuout & quiet & Jesu wyl abyde with the. Thou mayste anone dryue awaye thy lorde Jesu & lese his grace/if thou applye thy selfe to outwarde thynges / and if throughe negligẽce of thy selfe thou lese hym what frẽd shalt thou than haue: without a frende thou mayste nat longe endure / and if Jesu be nat thy frende moste byfore al other thou shalt by very heuy and disolate/& be

lefte without all perfyte frenshype/& ther
fore thou doest nat wisely if thou truste or
loye in any other thynge beside hym/we
shulde rather chose to haue all the worlde
agaynste vs thā to offende god: and ther-
fore of all that be to the lefe and dere let
thy lorde Jesu be the moste lefe and dere:
and moste specyally beloued to the aboue
all other/and let all other be beloued for
hym: and he onely for hym selfe. Jesus is
onely to be beloued for hym selfe/for he is
onely proued good and faythfull before
all other frendes. In hym: and for hym:
bothe enemyes & frendes are to be belo-
ued/and before all thynges we ought me
kely with all dylygence to praye to hym
that he may be beloued and honoured of
all his creatures. Neuer coucpt to be syn
gulerly loued or cōmended/for that belon
geth onely to god whiche hath none lyke
vnto hym/and desyre nat that any thyng
be occupyed with the in thy herte/ne that
thou be occupyed with loue of any crea-
ture/but that thy lorde Jesu may be i the
& in euery good mā and woman: Be pure
and clene within forth/without lettynge
of any creature as nyghe as thou can for
it behouethe the to haue a ryghte clene

and a pure herte to Jesu. If thou wylt knowe and fele howe swete he is/and verely thou mayste nat come to that purete but thou be preuented & drawen through his grace/ and that all other thynges set aparte thou be inwardly knytte & onede to hym: whan the grace of god commeth to a man than is he made myghtie and and stronge to do euery thynge that belongeth to vertue/and whan grace withdraweth/than is he made weyke and feble to do any good dede / and is in maner as he were lefte onely to payne and punysshementes. And if it happen so with the/dyspaire nat ouermoche therfore: nor leue nat thy good dedȝ vndone: but stãde alwaye strongly after the wyll of god / & tourne all thynges that shall come to the to the laude and praisynges of his name/ for after wynter cõmeth somer/ and after the nyght cõmeth the daye / and after a great tempeste: sheweth agayne ryghte clere and pleasaunt weder.

Of the wantynge of all solace and confortc. The.ix. Chapitre.

IT is no great thinge to dispyse mannes comforte whan the cō forte of god is present: but it is a great thynge and that a ryght great thynge a man to be so stronge in spirite that he may bere the wantynge of them bothe/ and for the loue of god and to his honoure to haue a redy wyll to bere as it were a desolacion of spirite/ and yet in no thynge to seke hym selfe ne his owne merytes/ what profe of vertue is it if a man be merye and deuoute in god whan grace commeth and vysyteth the soule/for that houre is desyred of euery creature/ he rydeth ryght saffely whom the grace of god bereth and supporteth/and what merueil is it if he fele no bourdē that is borne vp by hym that is almyghty and that is led by the souerayne guyde that is god hym selfe / we be alwaye glad to haue solace & consolacion but we wolde haue no tribulacion/ne we wyll nat lyghtly caste from vs the false loue of our selfe. The blessed martyr saynt Laurēce throughe the loue of god myghtly ouercame the loue of the worlde and of hym selfe / for he despysed all that was lykynge and delectable ī the worlde / and Sixtus the pope whome he

moste loued for the loue of god he suffered mekely to be taken frō hym/& so through the loue of god he ouercame the loue of man/and for mānes confortе he chose rather to folowe the wyll of god:do thou in lyke wyse and lerne to forsake some necessary/and some welbeloued frende for the loue of god:& take it nat greuously whan thou arte lefte or forsakē of thy frēde/ for of necessitie it behoueth worldly frendes to be dysseuered. It behoueth a man to fyghte long and myghtely to stryue with hym selfe or that he shall lerne fully to ouercome hym selfe/and or that he shal frely and redely sette all his desyres in god. whan a mā loueth hym selfe & moche trusteth to hym selfe:he falleth anone to mānes confortes: but the very true louer of Christe & the dylygent folower of vertue falleth nat so lyghtly to thē ne seketh nat moche suche sensyble swetnes ne suche bodely delytes / but rather is glad to suffer great harde labours & payne for the loue of Christe. Neuertheles whā ghostely cōfortes is sent to the of god take it mekely and gyue thankynges mekely for it:but know it for certayn that it is of the great goodnes of god that sēdeth it to the/ and

nat of thy deseruynge/ & loke thou be nat lyfte vp therfore in to pryde/ne that thou ioy nat moche therof ne p̄sume nat vaynly theri:but rather that thou be the more meke. For so noble a gyfte and the more ware and the more ferfull in all thy warkes/for that tyme wyll passe awaye/and the tyme of temptacion wyll shortly folowe after. whan conforte is withdrawen dyspayre nat therfore/but mekely and paciently abyde the visitacion of god/for he is able & of more power to gyue the more grace and more ghostely conforte than thou haddest fyrste. Suche alteracion of grace is no newe thynge/ ne no straynge thynge to thē that haue had experience ī the way of god / for in great sayntes & in holy Prophetes was many tymes foūde lyke alteracion / wherfore the Prophete Dauid sayth. ☞ Ego dixi in habūdācia mea:nō mouebor ineternū. ✗ That is to saye:whā Dauid had habūdaūce of ghostly conforte he sayd to our lorde / that he trusted he sholde neuer be remoued from suche conforte/ but after whā grace withdrewe:he sayd. ☞ Auertisti facie tuam a me:& fact⁹ sū conturbat⁹. ✗ That is: O lorde thou haste withdrawen thy ghostly cōfortes frō me:and I am lefte in great

trouble and heuynes: and yet neuertheles he dyspayred nat therfore/but prayed hertely vnto our lorde and sayd. ☞ Ad te domine clamabo et ad deum meum deprecabor/That is to saye I shall busely crye to the lorde / and I shall mekely praye to the for grace and comforte. And anone he had the effecte of his prayers as he wytnesseth him selfe sayng thus. ☞ Audiuit dominus et misertus est mei dominꝰ factus est adiutor meus: that is to saye/ our lorde hathe harde my prayer / & hath had mercy on me/and hath nowe agayne sent me his helpe & ghostely cõforte. And therfore he saith afterwarde: lorde thou haste tourned my sorowe i to Joy/& thou haste belapped me with heuenly gladnes and if almyghty god hath thus done with holy saintes/it is nat for vs weyke and feable persons to dyspayre though we somtyme haue feruoure of spirite and be somtyme lefte colde and voyde of deuocion. The holy ghoste goth and cõmeth after his pleasure & therfore the holy mã Job sayth: ☞ Lorde thou graciously visitest thy louer in the morowe tyde/that is to saye in the tyme of comforte /and sodeinly thou proueste hym that is to say i with

drawynge suche comfortes from hym/ wherin than maye I truste or in whome may I haue any confydence / but onely i the great endles grace and mercy of god for why: the company of good mē/ ne the felyshype of deuout brethern and fayth-full frendes/ ne the haupnge of holy boks or of deuoute treatises/ ne yet the herynge of swete songes: or of deuoute Impnes/ may lytell auayle and brynge forthe but lytell comforte to the soule whan we are lefte to our owne fraylty and pouerty.
And whā we be so lefe there is no better remedy but pacyence with a hoole resygnynge of our owne wyll to the wyl of god. I neuer founde yet any religious person so perfyte/ but that he had somtyme absetynge of grace or some mynysshyng of fer uour/ and there was neuer yet any sainte so hyghly rauysshed but that he fyrste or laste had some temptacyon/ he is nat wor thy to haue the hyghe gyfte of contēplacion/ that hath nat suffered for god some trybulacion. The temptacions goyng be fore/ were wonte to be a sothfaste token of heuenly comforte shortly comming after. And to them that be foūde stable in theyr tēptaciōs is promised by our lorde great

consolacion/ and therfore he sayth thus.
☞ He that ouercōmeth I shal giue him to eat of the tre of lyfe. ✠ Heuēly cōforte is sōtyme giuen to a man that he may after be more stronge to suffre aduersities/ but after foloweth temptacion that he be nat lyfte vp ī to pryde & thynke that he is worthy suche consolacion. The ghostely enemy slepeth nat ne the fleshe is nat yet fully mortified/ & therfore thou shalt neuer cesse to prepayre thy selfe to ghostely batayle for thou haste enemyes on euery side that euer wyl be redy to assayle the/ & to let thy good purpose all that they can.

☞ Of yeldynge thankes to god for his manyfolde graces The.x. Chapitre.

Why sekeste thou reste here syth thou arte borne to laboure/ dyspose thy selfe to pacience: rather than to cōfortes/ to bere the crosse of penaunce: rather than to haue gladnes: what temporall man wolde nat gladly haue spirituall cōfortes if he myght alway kepe thē: for spirituall cōfortes excede far al worldly delytes and all bodely pleasures/ for al

worldly delytes be eyther foule or vayne but ghostely delytes are onely tocūde and honeste/brought forthe by vertues & sent of god in to a clene soule. But suche comforte no man may haue whan he wold/ for the tyme of tētacion tarieth nat lōge. The false lybertie of wyll and the ouermoche truste that we haue in our selfe/ be moche contrary to the heuenly visitacions. Our lorde dothe well in sendynge suche comfortes/but we do nat well/ whā we yelde nat all the thankes therfore to hym agayne. The greateste cause why the gyftes of grace maye nat lightly come to vs/is for we be vnkunde to the gyuer and yelde nat thākes to hym from whome all goodnes commeth. Grace is alway gyuen to them that be redy to yelde thankes therfore agayne. And therfore it shal be taken from the proude man that is wonte to be gyuen to the meke man: I wolde none of that cōsolacion that shuld take from me conpunction / ne I wolde none of that contemplacion that shulde lyfte my soule in to presumpcion. Euery hyghe thyng in syght of man is nat holy ne euery desyre is nat clene and pure / ne euery swete thyng is nat good/ne al that

is lese and dere to man is nat alway plea
saũt to god/we shall therfore gladly take
suche gyftꝫ wherby we shalbe the more re
dy to forsake our selfe and our owne wyl/
he that knoweth the cõfortes that come
through the gyfte of grace/ and knoweth
also howe sharpe and paynfull the absen=
tynge of grace is: shall nat dare thynke
that any goodnes commeth of hym selfe/
but he shall openly confesse that of hym
selfe he is tyght pore and naked of al ver
tue/yelde therfore to god that is his/and
to thy selfe that is thyne: that is to saye/
thãke god for his manyfolde graces and
blame thy selfe for thy offenses. Holde in
the alway a sure grounde and a sure foũ=
dacion of mekenes/and thã the hyghnes
of vertue shall shortely be gyuen vnto the
for the hyghe toure of vertue maye nat
longe stande/ but it be borne vp with the
lowe foundacion of mekenes. They that
be moste great in heuen be leste in theyr
owne syght/ and the more glorious they
be/the meker they are in them selfe/ful of
truthe and of heuenly ioye/ nat desyrous
of any vaynglory or prayesynge of man.
Also they that be groũdely stabled and cõ
firmed in god maye in no wyse be lyft vp

in to pryde/and they that ascribe al goodnes to god / seke no glory ne vayne prayesynges in the worlde/but they desyre onely to ioy and to be glorified in god and desire i herte that he may be honoured/lauded/and praised/aboue all thinges both i hym selfe and in all his sayntes/and that is alwaye the thynge that perfyte men moste couepte and moste desyre to bryng aboute/be thou louyng and thākefull to god for the leest benefyte that he gyueth the/and than thou shalt be the more apte and the more worthy to receyue of hym more grater benefaites. Thynke the leest gyfte that he gyueth is great & the moste dyspysable thynges take as specyall gyftes and as great tokens of loue/for if the dygnyte of the gyuer be well consydered no gyfte that he gyueth shall seme lytell. It is no lytel thyng that is gyuen of god for though he sende paine and sorowe we shulde take them gladly and thankfully: for it is for our ghostely helth all that he suffereth to come vnto vs. If a mā desyre to holde the grace of god be he kinde and thankfull for suche grace as he hath receyued / pacyent whan it is withdrawen praye he deuoutely that it maye shortlye

come agayne/ & than be he meke & lowe in spirite that he lese it nat agayne through his presumpcion and pryde of herte.

¶ Of the smale nombre of the louers of the crosse. The. xi. Chapitre.

IEsus hathe many louers of his kyndome of heuen but he hath fewe beers of his crosse/ many desyre his consolacion/but fewe desyre his tribulacion: he fyndeth many folowes at eatyng & drynkynge/but he fyndeth fewe that wyl be with hi i his abstynence & fastynge / all men wolde ioy with Christe/ but fewe wyll any thynge suffre for Christe/many folowe hym to the breakyng of his breade for theyr bodely refeccion but fewe wyll folowe hym to drynke a draught of the Chalice of his passion. Many meruelle and honoure his myracles / but fewe wyll folowe the shame of his crosse: and of his other vilanies/ many loue Iesu as longe as no aduersite folowethy to them: and can prayse hym and blesse hym whan they receyue any benyfayte of hi/ but if Iesu a lytel withdrawe

hym frō them/ and a lytell forsaketh thē: anone they fall to some great grudgyng/ or to ouer great detection / or in to open desperacion/ but they that loue Jesu purely for hym selfe and nat for theyr owne profyte nor commodyte/ they blesse hym as hartely in temptacion and tribulation and in all other aduersites: as they do in tyme of consolation. And if he neuer sent them consolacion / yet wolde they alway laude hym and prayse hym. ✠ O howe maye the loue of Jesu do to the helpe of a soule if it be pure and clene nat myxte with any inordinate loue to hym selfe truely nothynge more: May nat they than that euer loke for worldly confortes and for worldly consolacions be called worldly marchauntes and worldly louers rather than louers of god/ do they nat opēly shewe by theyr dedes that they rather loue them selfe thā god/ yes truely. ✠ O where may be foūden any that wyll serue god freely and purely without lokyng for some rewarde for it agayne. And where maye be founde any so spirituall / that he is clerely deliuered and byrafte from loue of hym selfe / and that is truely poore in spirite and is hooly auoyded from loue of

creatur̄. I trowe none suche can be foūd but it be far hens and in far countreis / if a man gyue all his substance for god / yet he is nought and if he do great penaunce for his synnes/yet he is but lytell: and if he haue great connynge and knowlege/ yet he is far from vertue / and if he haue great vertue and brennyng deuocion/ yet moche wāteth hym/and that is specyally one thynge/whiche is moste necessary to hym/what is that? that al thynges forsaken and hym selfe also forsakyn/he go clerely out from hym selfe & kepe no thynge to hym selfe of any pryuate loue/ & whan he hath done all that he ought to do that he fele in hym selfe as he had nothynge done ne that he thynke it nat great that some other myght thynke grat: but that he thynke hym selfe truely as he is an vnprofytable seruaūt. ☞ For the auctoure of trouth our sauioure Christe saith whā ye haue done all that is cōmaundyd you to do: yet saye that ye be but vnprofytable seruauntes. Thā he that can thus do may well be called poore i spirite & naked of pryuate loue/and he may well say with the prophete Dauid. ☞ I am onede in god and am poore & meke i herte. There

is none more ryche / none more fre / ne none of more power/than he that can forsake hym selfe and all passyng thynges / and that truely can holde hym selfe to be lowest and vylest of all other.

¶ Of the waye of the crosse/ and howe profitable pacience is in aduersite. The. xii. Chapitre.

THe wordes of our sauiour be thought very harde and greuous: whan he sayth thus. ☞ Forsake your selfe take the crosse and folowe me. ✠ But it shalbe mothe more greuous to here these wordes at the laste Jugement. ☞ Go ye frō me ye cursed people in to the fyre that euer shall laste. ✠ But tho that nowe gladly here and folowe the wordes of Christe wherby he counceyleth them to folowe hym: shall nat than nede to drede for herynge those wordes of euerlastynge dampnacion. The sygne of the Crosse shall appere in heuen whan our lorde shall come to Juge the worlde/ and the seruauntes of the Crosse whiche confyrmed them selfe here i this lyfe to Christe crucified on the Crosse/

shall go to Christe theyr iuge with great fayth and truste in hym / why dost thou thā drede to take this crosse syth it is the very way to the kyngdome of heuen: and none but that. In the crosse is helth / in the crosse is lyfe / in the crosse is defence fro our enemyes / in the crosse is infusion of heuenly swetenes / in the crosse is the strength of mynde / the ioy of spirite / the hyghnes of vertue / and the full perfectiō of all holynes: and there is no helthe of soule nor hope of euerlastynge lyfe: but through vertue of the crosse. Take therfore the crosse and folowe Jesu: and thou shalte go in to the lyfe euerlastynge / he hath gone before the: beryng his crosse / and dyed for the vpō the crosse / that thou shuldest in lyke wyse bere with hym the crosse of penaūce and of trybulacion / and that thou shuldest be redy lyke wyse for his loue to suffre deth if nede requyre as he hathe done for the. If thou dye with hym: thou shalte lyue with hym / and if thou be felowe with hym in payne: thou shalte be with him in glory. Beholde thā howe in the crosse standeth all and howe in dyeng to the worlde lyeth al our helth and that there is no other waye to lyfe &

rene inwarde peace but the waye of the crosse & of dayly mortifyng of the body to the spirite. Go whether thou wylte and seke what the lyst & thou shalt neuer fynde aboue the: ne beneth the/ within the: ne without the/ more hygh/ more excellent/ ne more sure way to Christe thā the way of the holy crosse/ dispose euery thyng after thy wyll/ & thou shalt neuer fynde but that thou must of necessyte sō what suffre eyther with thy wyl or agaynst thy wyl/ and so thou shalte alway fynde the crosse for either thou shalt fele payne i thy body or in thy soule thou shalt haue trouble of spirite. Thou shalt be somtyme as thou were forsaken of god. Somtyme thou shalt be vexed with thy neyghboure/ and that is yet more paynful/ thou shalt somtyme be greuous to thy selfe/ & thou shalt fynde no meane to be delyuered/ but that it behoueth the for to suffre tyll it shall please almyghty god of his goodnes otherwyse to dispose for the: for he wyll that thou shalt lerne to suffre trybulacion without cōsolacion that thou mayst therby lerne hooly to submitte thyselfe to him and by tribulacion to be made more meke than thou were tyrste. No man feleth

the passyon of Christe so effectuously/ as he that seeth lyke payne as Christe dyd. This crosse is alway redy & euery where it abydeth the/ and thou mayst nat flee it ne fully escape it where euer thou become for where so euer thou become thou shalt bere thy selfe aboute with the and so thou shalte alwaye fynde thy selfe. Tourne the where thou wylte aboue the & beneth the: within the and without the/ & thou shalte fynde this crosse on euery syde/ so that it shalbe necessary for the that thou alwaye kepe the in pacience/ and that it behoueth the to do if thou wylte haue inwarde peace and deserue the perpetuall crowne in heuen/ if thou wylte gladly bere this crosse it shal bere the and it shal bringe the to the ende that thou desyrest where thou shalte neuer after haue any thynge to suffre: And if thou bere this crosse agaynste thy wyll: thou makest a great burden to thy selfe/ and it wyll be more greuous to the and yet it behoueth the to bere it/ and if it happen the to put awaye one crosse/ that is to say one trybulacion: yet surely a nother wyll come and happely more greuous thā the fyrste was. Trowest thou to escape that neuer

yet any mortall mā myght escape. what saynte in this worlde hath ben without this crosse and without some trouble. Truly our lorde Jesu was nat one houre without some sorowe & payne as long as he lyued here / for it behoued hym to suffre deth and to ryse agayne & so to entre in to his glory / and howe it is than that thou seketh any other way to heuen than this playne hygh waye of the crosse. All the lyfe of Christe was crosse and martyrdome / and thou seketh pleasure & ioy. Thou erreth greatly if thou seke any other thynge than to suffre: For all this mortall lyfe is full of mysteries and is all beset aboute and marked with crosses / and the more hyghly that a man profyteth in spirite the more paynfull crosses shall he fynde / for by the sothfastnes of Christes loue wherin he dayly increaseth / dayly appereth vnto hym more and more the payne of this exile. But neuertheles a man thus vered with payne is nat left vtterly without all confort / for he seeth well that great frute and hygh reward shall growe vnto hym by the berynge of his crosse: And whan a man frely submytteth hym selfe to suche trybulacion /

than all the burden of tribulacion is so deynly tourned in to a great truste of heuenly cõsolacion. And the more the flesshe is punysshed with trybulacion / the more is the soule strengthed dayly by inwarde consolacion / and somtyme the soule shall fele suche cõforte in aduersytes / that for the loue and delyre that it hath to be conformed to Christe crucified it wolde nat be without sorowe and trouble / for it consydereth well that the more that it may suffre for his loue here / the more acceptable shall he be to hym in the lyfe to come. But this worlyng is nat in the power of man: but through the grace of god that is to say that a frayle man shulde take and loue that his bodily kynde so moche abhorreth and fleeth / for it is nat in the power of man gladly to bere the crosse / to loue the crosse / to chastyce the body and to make it buxum to the wyll of the spirite / to fle honoures gladly to sustayne reprefes / to dispyse hym selfe and to conceyt to be dispysed / pacyently to suffre aduersytes with all displeasures therof / and nat to delyre any maner of profyte i this worlde / if thou truste in thy selfe thou shalt neuer bryng this mater aboute: but

if thou truste in god / he shall sende the strength from heuen: and the worlde and the flesshe shalbe made subiecte to the: yea and if thou be strongly armed with faith and be marked with the crosse of Christe as his housholde seruaũte thou shalt nat nede to fere thy ghostly enemy for he shal also be made subiecte to the: so that he shall haue no power agaynste the. Purpose thy selfe therfore as a true faythfull seruaũte of god to bere mãfully the crosse of thy lorde Jesu: that for thy loue was crucifyed vpon the crosse / prepayre thy selfe to suffre all maner of aduersites and discomodites in this wretched lyfe / for so shall it be with the where so euer thou hyde the / & there is no remedy to escape / but that thou muste kepe thy selfe alway in pacience / if thou desyre to be a dere and a welbeloued frende of Christe: drynke affectuously with hym a draught of the chalyce of his tribulacion. As for consolacions cõmitte them to his wyll that he order them as he knoweth most expedient for the / but as for thy selfe: and for as moche as in the is / dispose the to suffre & whan tribulacions come take thẽ as specyal cõsolacions. Sayng with the Apostle

thus. ☞ The passions of this worlde be nat worthy of them selfe to bringe vs to the glory that is ordeyned for vs in the lyfe to come. And that instruc though one man alone myght suffre almoche as all men do suffre/ whan thou cõmest to that degre of pacience: that trybulacion is swete to the and for the loue of god is sauoury and pleasaunte in thy syght/ than mayst thou truste that it is well with the and that thou art in good estate for thou haste founde paradyse in erthe. But as long as it is greuous to the to suffre and thou sekest to flc/ so longe it is nat well with the: ne so longe thou arte nat in the perfyte way of pacience/ but if thou couldest bringe thy selfe to that estate that thou shuldest be at/ that is to suffre gladly for god and to dye fully to the worlde than it shulde shortly be better with the and thou shuldest fynde great peace/ but yet all thoughe thou were rapte with Paule i to the thyrde heue: thou shuldest nat therfore be sure without al aduersite. For our sauoure spekyng of saint Paule after he had ben rapte in to heuen: sayde thus of hym. ☞ I shall shewe him howe many thynges he shall suffre for me.

To suffre therfore remayneth to the if thou wylte loue thy lorde Jesu and serue hym perpetually: wolde to god that thou werte worthy to suffre somwhat for his loue. O howe great ioy shulde it be to the to suffre for hym/ what gladnes to al the saintes of heuē: and howe great edifiyng to thy neyghbourc/all men cōmende pacience/ & yet fewe men wyll suffre. Right wysly thou oughtest to suffre some lytell thynge for god that sufferest moche more for the worlde. And knowe this for certayne that after this bodily deth/ thou shalte yet lyue/ and the more that thou canste dye to thy selfe here the more thou begynnest to lyue to god. No mā is apte to receyue the heuenly rewardes/ but he haue fyrste lerned to bere aduersyties for the loue of Christe for nothynge is more acceptable to god/nor more profitable to man in this worlde thā to be glad to suffre for Christe/in so moche that if it were put in thy election/ thou shuldest rather chewse aduersity than prosperite/for thā by the pacient suffering therof thou shuldest be the more lyke to Christe and the more confermed to all his saintes. Our merite and our perfection of lyfe stādeth

nat in consolacions and swetenes/but ra
ther in sufferyng of great greuous aduer
sytes and tribulacions. For if there had
ben any never or better way for the helth
of mānes soule than to suffre / our lorde
Jesu wolde haue shewed it by wordes/or
by examples. But for there was nat/ther
fore he openly exorted his disciples that
folowed hym: and all other that desyred
to folowe hym: to forsake theyr owne
wyll & to take the crosse of penaunce and
folowe hym. Sayng thus: ☞ who so
wyll come after me: forsake he his owne
wyll: take he the crosse & folowe he me. ☜
Therfore all thynges serched and red/be
this the fynall conclusion/ that by many
tribulacions it behoueth vs to entre in to
the kyngdome of heuen / to the whiche
bryngе vs our lorde Jesus. Amen.